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Sri Lanka

U.N. Launches \$ 50 million appeal for displaced Tamils in Northern Sri Lanka

Canada increases it's assistance to 7.5 million Dollars

By Siva Sivapragasam

The United Nations Organization along with the Government of Sri Lanka has issued an appeal to raise fifty million dollars to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of the displaced civilians in the war-torn areas of Vanni and Mullaitivu.

The urgent appeal comes in the wake of immediate needs for about 250,000 people, including food, water, sanitation, shelter, nutrition, health and protection, as well as education needs for thousands of children who have been without schooling due to the conflict. According to a U.N. source, the number of people trapped and yet remaining in the conflict zone is around 50,000.

The assistance will also go for support of agricultural and economic projects for persons returning to their own homes.

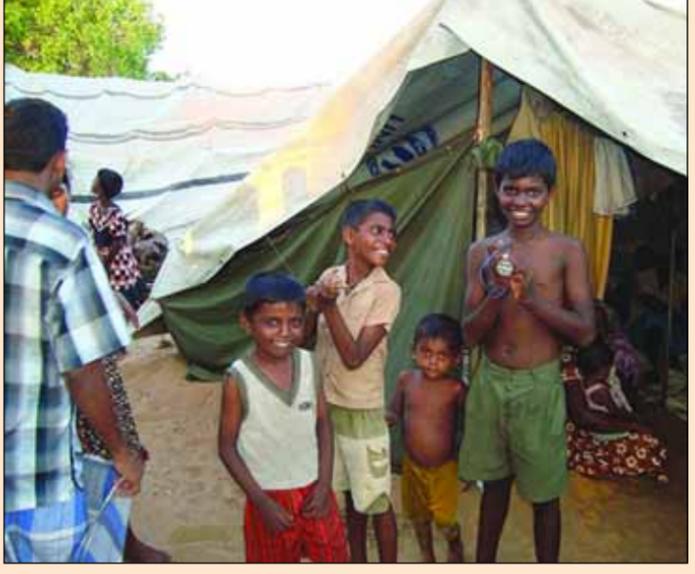
Canada has also increased its commitment for rehabilitation to 7.5 million dollars from the earlier amount pledged. This came about after the recent trip of Ms. Beverley J. Oda, Minister for International Co-operation.

Meanwhile, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki moon has told reporters in New York that he had telephoned Sri Lankan President Rajapakse and called for a pause in the fighting to allow humanitarian workers into the conflict zone. He also stated that "the World is watching events closely, including for violations of international law.



Children in Mullivaaykkaal

"No fire zone", Sri Lanka-May 1, 2009



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Increasing Burden of Cancer Beginning to Strain Parts of System

2009 Quality Index Reports on Ontario's Cancer System

Despite improvements to the cancer system including lower smoking rates and better screening and care for colorectal cancer patients, this year's Cancer System Quality Index also reports that the increasing burden of cancer is beginning to strain parts of the cancer system.

"The overall quality of the cancer system is very good with many indicators showing improvements each year," said Michael Decter, Chair, Cancer Quality Council of Ontario. "At the same time, there is still room for improvement. We continue to see higher obesity rates and a significant number of the population not following low-risk drinking guidelines that we know raise a person's risk of cancer. As a society we are still not doing enough and require greater commitment on the part of Ontarians, governments, and health professionals to promote healthier lifestyles and modify behaviours."

More than half of all cancers are preventable and about half of cancer deaths are related to tobacco use, diet and physical activity. However, while Ontarians are more physically active (48 per cent) and consuming more fruits and vegetables (42 per cent) than in 2001, at 17 per cent of the population, the obesity rate continues to be a concern.



Dr. Bob Bell, President and CEO, University Health Network, The Honourable Margaret Best, Minister of Health Promotion, Dr. George Pasut, Vice President, Prevention and Screening, Dr. Rene Shumak, Radiologist-in-Chief, Ontario Breast Screening Program

The Index shows gains being made in the fight against colorectal cancer, the second leading cause of cancer deaths in Ontario. Significant progress has been made towards improving screening, diagnosis and treatment for colorectal cancer patients, which are all contributing to better survival rates. In the past year, screening for colorectal cancer increased by 30 per cent and diagnostic colonoscopies are being completed in a timely manner. Survival for colorectal cancer has increased to 62 per cent -- up 11 per cent from the previous decade.

"I am pleased to see the progress Ontario is making in screening for colorectal screening. The Ontario Government's commitment to the

ColonCancerCheck program is making a difference. If detected early enough, there is a 90 per cent chance of surviving colorectal cancer, so that's why screening and early detection are so critical. We have a ways to go but we are on the right track," said Terrence Sullivan, President and CEO, Cancer Care Ontario.

The increasing burden of cancer is largely attributed to an ageing population and it is beginning to impact the capacity of the system. An area where the cancer system is starting to show signs of strain is chemotherapy. Until now, Ontario has been able to keep wait times for chemotherapy in check. However, the Index shows that wait times for chemotherapy are starting to increase.

"Cancer Care Ontario is looking at ways to maximize resources to ensure that patients receive timely access to chemotherapy as close to home as possible," noted Sullivan. "We are working with the regions and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to address this issue."

Other highlights from the Cancer System Quality Index include:

?? Despite most patient wishes, over half of Ontario cancer deaths occurred in an acute care hospital setting, but these numbers are beginning to decrease. In addition, over 40 per cent of cancer patients are visiting the emergency department for pain and symptom control in the last two weeks of their life.

?? Wait times for cancer surgeries show some modest improvements, but variation exists across regions in their ability to meet targets for the higher priority surgeries (priority two and three cases).

?? With the exception of lung cancer survival, rates for the 4 most common cancers (prostate, breast, colon and lung) have significantly improved since 1991-1995. Too many lung cancer patients (78 per cent) are diagnosed in the later stages of the disease (stages three or four).

?? The vast majority (97 per



cent) of cancer patients treated in outpatient units continue to report a reasonably high degree of satisfaction with most aspects of their care. While scores for emotional support, remain lower (this indicator was rated as satisfactory by only 51 per cent of cancer patients).

The Cancer Quality Council of Ontario monitors and reports to the public on the quality and performance of the cancer system. The Cancer System Quality Index was launched in 2005 and presents a rolling snapshot of activity in 29 key indicators that cover the spectrum of cancer services, from prevention through to end-of-life care.

Cancer Care Ontario is the provincial agency responsible for continually improving cancer services. As the government's cancer advisor, Cancer Care Ontario works to reduce the number of people diagnosed with cancer and make sure that patients receive better care every step of the way.

For more information visit: www.csqi.on.ca.

Lenore Bromley, Senior Public Affairs Advisor, Cancer Care Ontario - 416.971.9800 ext. 3383, lenore.bromley@cancercare.on.ca

Minister Best is One in a Million

The Ontario Breast Screening Program Celebrates its 1 Millionth

Health Promotion Minister, 50 year old Margaret Best marked an important milestone for cancer screening on April 22nd, 2009 as she became the 1 millionth woman screened by the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP). "Regular breast screening is an important part of taking care of my health and I encourage all women aged 50 and over to ask their health care provider if a mammogram is right for them," said the Minister. "The OBSP provides women in Ontario with mammography services and I want to thank everyone involved in the program for your efforts and contributions to its success."

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Ontario women. In 2009, it is projected that 8,700 Ontario women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 2,100 will die from the disease. In Ontario, it is recommended that women aged 50 and older have a screening mammogram, generally every two years.

"Since the Program began, the OBSP has provided over 3 million screens to Ontario women aged 50 and over and has detected over 16,000 cancers, the majority in early cancer stages," said Terrence Sullivan, president and CEO, Cancer Care Ontario. "Breast screening saves lives and more women should get screened and not just for breast cancer. Women should be screened regularly for cervical cancer and now with ColonCancerCheck, women over 50 should be screened for colorectal cancer as well."

"Screening finds breast cancer earlier, and by detecting cancer early women have

more treatment options available to them," said Dr. George Pasut, vice president, Prevention and Screening, Cancer Care Ontario. "While we know the mortality rate for women in the target age range with breast cancer is decreasing, we need to continue to work to reach under-screened populations and to ensure that services are available to continue to meet the growing demand."

In 2008, there were just under 1.5 million Ontario women between the ages of 50-69 potentially eligible to participate in the OBSP. The number of women in this age group is increasing by approximately 48,000 women each year. Close to 63 per cent of eligible Ontario women are being screened for breast cancer with mammograms every two years. This rate has remained reasonably constant since 2000-2001. The goal of the OBSP is to achieve a 70 per cent participation rate in Ontario women aged 50-69 by the year 2010, and 90 per cent by the year 2020.

The Ontario Breast Screening Program is an organized screening program that offers important advantages to women. Women with or without a family physician can be screened through the OBSP. Women can book their own appointments and are reminded by letter when they are due for their next mammogram.

To find an OBSP site, women can call 1-800-668-9304 or use the OBSP Screening Locations search tool at www.cancercare.on.ca/obsplocations.

Cancer Care Ontario continually improves cancer services so that fewer

people get cancer and patients receive better care.

For more information visit: www.cancercare.on.ca.

Lenore Bromley, Sr. Public Affairs Advisor, Cancer Care Ontario
416.971.9800 ext. 3383, lenore.bromley@cancercare.on.ca

ley@cancercare.on.ca
Dipika Damerla, Sr. Communications Adviser
Minister's Office, Ministry of Health Promotion
416-326-8497,
dipika.damerla2@ontario.ca



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From the Publisher's Desk ...

Tamil Civilians Struggle in Internment camps

The thought of a camp for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Sri Lanka offers a sense of relief to many outsiders as aid now flows to the anguished population. However, the extent of aid is not specified, and the conditions are not known without sufficient international organizations or media present.

Independent observers are calling the camps setup for displaced Tamils are in fact "Internment camps".

"Internment is the imprisonment or confinement, of people, usually in large groups, without trial." The difference between an internment camp and jail is that in jail one is detained in lawful custody by the state because he/she is convicted of a crime or awaiting a trial, in contrast in an internment camp one is held in captivity without committing or even being convicted of any crime.

The military directed internment camp in the Northern Sri

Lankan city of Vavuniya that many of the Tamil civilians reside in is merely in the control of the Sri Lankan government after they leave the LTTE held areas. There is no freedom in these camps as the Sri Lankan military holds a tight surveillance on the civilians. Although food is claimed to be distributed, at limited quantities, Tamils are still suffering the same conditions of injustice and danger that they would have in the LTTE zones under the Sri Lankan military onslaught. Mothers are still struggling to obtain enough food for their children and many of their thoughts surround when the next meal would be given.

Is this the type of assistance that the Tamils have been waiting for? Military run internment camps have been provided to the Tamil people with the cost of their freedom, dignity, and even their lives. Women have heard to be abducted and sexually abused by the military and their dignity has

been removed as they are forced to bath openly. They are unable to tell anyone about their concerns, fears and injustices that they face daily.

Why the media is denied access to these internment camp areas?

Many questions are raised concerning the conditions of these internment camps and how the military is actually treating the Tamil civilians that are living in Vavuniya's camp. Based on independent footage that was obtained by London's Channel 4 News recently, aid workers were interviewed and described the poor conditions and frequent casualties that have occurred in this camp. There is a constant battle of food shortages and powerlessness that the civilians have begun to come to terms with.

When the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in UK, Nihal Jayasinghe was interviewed in West London for Channel 4 on

May 5th, his only response to the conditions in the internment camps were that he was unable to comment. The question that is posed now is if the Sri Lankan High Commissioner is unable to comment, then why is he being interviewed and who is in fact legitimately authorized to comment. The politically savvy response that Jayasinghe provided represented the underlying message, which is that the Sri Lankan Government is determined to conceal the terrible conditions that these internment camps offered.

When asked why there were no international aid and media allowed to enter the internment camps the response that was given was "We will let them in once we are satisfied that the conditions are conclusive for public view."

Does this then confirm the state of Vavuniya's camp?

by Krishni Loganathan, BA (Hons)

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Managing Editor & Publisher
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Editorial & Marketing Consultant
Siva Sivapragasam

Promotion Co-ordinator
Senthil Senthivel

Layout Design
Santosh Kumar K.A

Graphics Consultant
Gnane B. Gnanendran

Contributing Columnists

Anand. J

Abizar Badani

Arun Senathirajah

Ayktah Grover

Prof. Ghai, Saran

Harish . G

K.T. Kumaran

Krishni. L

Kumar Punithavel

Mithura Anandarajah

Nate. V

Raymond Rajabalan

Rudy Ruthran

Shiyam. L

Sri Krishnan. S

Circulation Co-ordinator

S.S. Mathavan

Killy Sivarajah

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Forced Eviction into 'Menikfarm' concentration camp for Tamils



April 29, 2009: "I repeated at this morning's press conference the need for the fighting to stop. But now en route from the IDP camp to the president I'm thinking too about the basic deal for those who have escaped the conflict zone: the Sri Lankan government want aid but for that they need to offer access to the UN and NGOs. - David Miliband, Minister of Foreign Affairs, UK

Mother's Day Message by the Honourable Jim Karygiannis, Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Agincourt

There is no job more satisfying and demanding than that of mother. Mothers, the world over, regardless of their circumstance, share a collective goal - to provide the best possible life for their children.

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In North America, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May. It is a time to order flowers, send special cards, visit and telephone our mothers telling them how important their love and support is in our lives. It is a time to cherish all that our mothers mean to us.

As we celebrate this day with our mothers, I join with you in wishing all our mothers a "Happy Mother's Day."

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Church groups in India demand U.N. intervention to help Sri Lankan Tamils

Church groups in India have demanded the United Nations intervene to help end Colombo's "hostilities" against Tamil people in Sri Lanka.

In New Delhi, hundreds of Catholics and Protestants, mostly priests, pastors and nuns, held a joint demonstration on April 29 against what they called "genocide" in the neighboring island nation.

A day earlier, Catholic theologians who met for their annual meeting in Pune, western India, sought U.N. mediation to find "an amicable and mutually acceptable political solution" to the conflict.

At the New Delhi protest, organized by the Ecumenical Clergy Forum for Human Rights, priests and nuns in traditional Church dress sang and carried placards in support of Tamil civilians caught in the fighting in Sri Lanka.

The ecumenical forum was established in December 2008, initiated by the Protestant Tamil Nadu Theological College to defend human rights. More than 15 Christian denominations, including the Catholic Church, and their organizations joined the recent protest.



A memorandum from the protesters welcomed the Sri Lankan government's announcement on April 27 that it would end the use of heavy weapons against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and concentrate on rescuing trapped civilians. "But this step, which is too little too late, does not guarantee and fulfill the just demands of the Tamils on the island," it added.

The memorandum, handed to officials at the U.N. offices in New Delhi also demanded international intervention to end war crimes and restore human dignity in Sri Lanka.

Protesters also submitted the memorandum to Indian President Pratibha Devisingh Patil and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, as well

as the Sri Lankan High Commissioner.

"The bodies, psyche and spirit of the innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka have been shattered. In the name of war on terror, the Sri Lankan government and military is engaged in genocide," said the memorandum.

It demands the U.N. and the international community "initiate a process" to bring peace through a political settlement to protect the rights and self-determination of the Tamil people.

The memorandum also urged the Indian government to "stop all logistical and military support" to the Sri Lankan government and for international agencies to manage relief camps without interference from Colombo.

Another demand was for an independent international fact-finding team to visit the war zone to assess damage and monitor humanitarian assistance.

The memorandum also calls on the Sri Lankan government to announce a unilateral ceasefire to allow Tamil civilians to leave the war zone and hasten rehabilitation, food and shelter to displaced people.

About 200,000 Tamils are dis-

placed in the war zone with "thousands barricaded in concentration camp-like conditions" in government-run camps, Vijayakumar James of the Church of South India told demonstrators.

"Free media does not exist in Sri Lanka," said James, a member of a team that visited the war zone in February. "No cameras or mobile phones are permitted in Jaffna. There is a systematic blocking of news coming out of the area," he added.

The Protestant lay leader also alleged the Sri Lankan army is "systematically killing Tamils, even children". He also said about 200 churches had been destroyed in the Jaffna area alone and that war victims have "no food, no medicine."

IMF loan would not be delayed, Sri Lanka central bank says

Technical levels discussions for Sri Lanka's International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan have now been finalized and with the UN Security Council also not standing in the way, there would be no further delays, a senior central banker said.

Media reports indicated the United States, which has substantial say in IMF decision-making, could delay a 1.9 billion US dollar IMF balance of payments support loan to Sri Lanka.

"Neither the governance rules nor the mandate of the IMF allow political considerations to be taken into account and therefore the Staff Report should be placed before the Board in a few days time," deputy central bank gover-



Raneer Jayamaha

nor Raneer Jayamaha said.

She says the UN Security Council has also said that blocking the loan was unnecessary and there was no reason for the facili-



ty to be delayed any longer.

Claude Heller, the Mexican ambassador who presided the 15-nation UN Security Council in April, indicated there was no pressure at the council to withhold the IMF loan.

"No ... I have not heard anyone suggesting this at this time," AFP news agency quoted Heller as saying in response to a question after an informal council discussion on the Sri Lankan situation late Thursday.

Jayamaha said technical level discussions regarding the loan have been finalized and an IMF 'safeguards assessment mission' which is Colombo is in the process of finalizing its report.

[LBO]

Indian woman aims for chilli record

JORHAT, India (AFP) - An Indian woman is hoping to enter the record books as the world's "hottest" woman after munching 51 fiery chillies in two minutes, organisers of the feat said Friday.

Anandita Dutta Tamuly, 26, chewed her way through the chillies before an audience late Thursday in India's northeast.

She consumed the chillies in the company of British celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay, who was producing a television show on food and anchoring the event in Jorhat, 300 kilometers (180 miles) east of Assam's main city of Guwahati.

"In two minutes, Anandita gob-

bled 51 red-hot chillies without batting an eyelid or shedding a tear, and also smeared seeds of 25 chillies into her eyes in one minute," Atul Lahkar, a chef who organised the show, told AFP.

The chillies are known locally as bhut jolokia and are a staple of local diet in Assam. They are recognised by Guinness World Records as the world's hottest chili pepper.

Guinness World Records had "asked us to provide them with a recording of the feat supervised by someone responsible. We asked Ramsay to be the adjudicator," said Diganta Saikia, another



coordinator.

Tamuly said she became hooked on hot peppers when she was five years old.

"I had a sore tongue and my mother applied a chilli paste to cure the infection. After that I developed a penchant for chillies," Tamuly said.

Earlier, the Indian Theological Association urged the Sri Lankan government and rebels to lay down their arms and come to the negotiating table. Forty nine theologians, including 11 women, who attended the meeting expressed their "solidarity with the suffering of Tamils".

Tamil "children, women, the elderly and the wounded are subjected to untold gruesome inhuman suffering, and thousands of them are being killed in the ongoing military offensive," the association said in a statement. Its annual meeting ended on April 29.

Meanwhile, in Sri Lanka, Jaffna's Catholic bishop called on Colombo to allow access to the displaced civilians packed in government camps on the Jaffna Peninsula.

"Allow UNHCR and other aid agencies to work in internally displaced people camps as the government is struggling to cope with the situation alone," Bishop Thomas Savundaranayagam said.

He issued the appeal following a four-day visit to refugee camps and hospitals in Vavuniya, Mannar and Trincomalee districts in Jaffna.

[UCA]

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Severely Injured Patients Stream into Vavuniya Hospital

Paul McMaster is working along with another Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) surgeon and Ministry of Health staff at Vavuniya hospital in the Northern province of Sri Lanka to treat some of the tens of thousands of civilians streaming out of the Vanni, the conflict zone to the north.

Over the last few days an estimated 60,000 civilians have escaped the heavy fighting in the Vanni and many wounded have been brought in buses to Vavuniya hospital. On April 21, MSF reported treating 400 people in 36 hours, almost twice as many patients as were admitted the previous week. The following day, patients continued to arrive at these levels, said Dr. McMaster.

What is the situation at the hospital now?

We and our Sri Lankan colleagues have been dealing with casualties brought into us over these last few days from the conflict in the north of us. We've been seeing very severely wounded patients, the numbers of patients have increased rapidly over the last three or four days, so we're seeing a stream of badly wounded people being brought

into us.

Our hospital has got about 450 beds, and we've now got more than 1,700 patients in the hospital - on the floor, in the corridors, and even outside. So the hospital is very close to being overwhelmed.

What conditions are the patients arriving in?

About three-quarters of the injured coming in now have suffered from blast injuries, and the rest are gunshot wounds and mine explosions. We are seeing who has survived on the field and actually reached us. We see abdominal injuries, but many of the chest or head injuries we're suspecting don't survive the blasts to get to us.

We are doing a lot of amputations. Many of the lower limbs are severely, severely injured and blown off. So we're doing emergency amputations and a lot of these patients we're doing abdominal explorations, or damage to internal organs and the bowel, we're dealing with chest injuries, draining damaged chests and lungs, and we're dealing with some head injuries as well, but the majority of the severe head injuries don't make it to us. Buses that bring these people down, people are dying on those buses,



A boy who fled the Vanni area required an amputation at Vavuniya hospital

and bodies are being taken off the buses sometimes as well.

Are you seeing many women or children with severe injuries?

We're seeing a lot of men with severe injuries, but we're also seeing a lot of women, a lot of children. We're doing amputations on children; we're doing abdominal explorations for internal damage as well, in children. And sometimes we're operating on both the mother and father and a child from the same family that had been wounded in the same explosion or mine. We're seeing whole families that are wounded sometimes.

We had a young woman of about 19 who is breastfeeding that I had to do a major leg amputation on. I just wonder what the future for her life and child will be. We're seeing children that have no parents with them. We had a little boy with a blast amputation of his leg, I think he's about five, and he's being looked after by his big brother, who's about seven, and we don't know where the parents are or whether they're even alive. But these two little children are in the middle of a very traumatic hospital setting on their own.

In what sort of mental state do patients arrive?

Well we're obviously seeing the critically injured and the shock patients. As I said earlier, they just lie silently waiting their turn to get the treatment. We're dealing with critical people who need surgery urgently, and truthfully there's little time to go further. We have people in the team who are counselors and mental officers who are working in the camps. But these are deeply, deeply traumatized people. We have children sitting in the middle of emergency wards seeing people brought in with major limb injuries. And these are children, just sitting silently, emotionless, in the middle of all this, as we try to treat them and move them quickly up to the surgery or the ward.

Can you tell what the patients' living conditions must have been like before they arrived at the hospital?

Many of them clearly have been living under very difficult conditions. They come in needing acute surgery, so are not able to eat, and certainly some of them have had little to eat in the previous days. They come with nothing; they have barely the clothes that they have on. Of course,

they're injured. The family members, if there is one, come with nothing - no pots, no pans. We and our other colleagues and organizations give them sometimes some clothes and sandals and a mattress. And we're also feeding in the camps, supporting in the camps, thousands of children and pregnant women who need supplementary food to try to build them up again.

What are the challenges to providing care in the hospital right now?

The post-operative care is the area of main concern, really. It's very difficult. We have a ward that I think is supposed to have 45 beds; we've had something like 325 patients in it. It's extremely difficult to give any quality post-operative care, and we try constantly to pick out the ones who are at risk of infection or sepsis.

The nurses work very hard; the nurses are working 19-, 20-hour shifts. But even so, there are very few nurses to go around. And often it's trying to pick the patient with the problem and deal with it, rather sometimes doing our full normal quality of work that we want to support these people. It is very difficult for all the staff here, who are all working very, very hard.

What do you expect to see in the coming days?

From what I hear, the numbers are likely to continue over these coming days, and could even increase. We're making what preparations we can to receive and even larger number of casualties over these coming days. And our hope and prayer would be, of course, this stops very quickly, but I've seen no sign of that as yet, and I've not heard anything from the team or our Sri Lankan colleagues to suggest that's going to stop any time soon. [MSF]

Sri Lankan Tamils

Protest in Melbourne

Hundreds of Tamil supporters prepare to march on Government House as they protest the actions of the Sri Lankan government against the Tamil Tigers causing the deaths of innocent civilians, in Melbourne on April 28, 2009. They are asking supporters to email to the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith, urging the Australian Government to make immediate and direct representations to both the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. (Getty Images)



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The Scarborough Hospital well prepared for swine flu

Hospital taking extra precautions to keep patients and visitors safe



Extensive precautions to prevent the transmission of swine flu at The Scarborough Hospital are helping ensure that both the General and Grace campuses are safe for patients, visitors and staff.

To date, there have been no suspected cases of swine flu at TSH. Still, a rapid preparation to deal with potential cases began last week when the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care first alerted hospitals to the risk.

"Patients who have scheduled appointments or procedures should know that the hospital is safe," says Dr. John Wright, President and CEO. "Because swine flu is a community-based outbreak, people are probably safer here than in other places in the community due to the diligent precautions we have put in place."

While we are asking visitors who may have visited destinations with confirmed cases of swine flu to not enter the hospital, day-to-day hospital business continues for patients in our Emergency Department, specialty clinics, day surgery and other areas. Those who may have traveled to affected destinations, and who have flu-like symptoms including the acute onset of a new or worsening cough and/or shortness of breath, sore throat, headache or fatigue/exhaustion, will be provided with surgical masks and asked to make use of the hand sanitizers available throughout the hospital.

As always, hand hygiene remains the best defense against

the spread of infection and disease.

"Despite the increased level of monitoring and precaution, patients can be reassured that TSH is well prepared for an outbreak situation," says Dr. Wright. "Many of our staff worked through SARS and other outbreaks, and the lessons learned are being brought to the table in spades. I don't think there is a more experienced team at any hospital in this province."

More information about swine flu, and measures TSH has in place to deal with the situation, is available at www.tsh.to/swineflu.

TSH leads Ontario in hand hygiene

On Thursday, the province publicly released hand hygiene data and The Scarborough Hospital had the highest compliance rate of all Ontario hospitals - 97 percent, compared to a provincial average of 61 percent.

The data collected measures how often staff and physicians correctly clean their hands before and after a patient contact.

"With all the concerns surrounding swine flu, I am very proud that the staff and physicians here have taken hand hygiene so seriously," says Dr. John Wright, President and CEO of The Scarborough Hospital. "Proper hand hygiene is still the most effective way to protect our patients and ourselves."

More information about TSH's hand hygiene compliance results are available at www.tsh.to.

RBC STUDY FINDS HOME-BUYING INTENTIONS STILL STRONG

Opportunity awaits - two-in-three Canadians think it's a buyer's market

TORONTO, According to the 16th Annual RBC Homeownership Survey, 65 per cent of Canadians think it's a buyers market right now and more than a quarter of Canadians (27 per cent) say they intend to purchase a home over the next two years, up four points from 23 per cent in 2008 - the largest single year increase since 2001. Additionally, almost half (48 per cent) indicate it makes sense to buy a home now versus waiting until next year.

The RBC survey found that younger Canadians are most likely to spark an upsurge in home sales. In the under 35 group, 48 per cent said they plan to buy, which is up sharply from 36 per cent last year. Renters also appear to be saying they are tired of paying someone else's mortgage payment, with 38 per cent planning to become homeowners in the next two years.

"The current economic environment does not appear to have dampened Canadians' overall confidence in the housing market," said Karen Leggett, head, Home Equity Financing, RBC Royal Bank. "Canadians continue to have an overwhelming belief in the long-term value of a home and we're seeing this in the buying intentions of many first time homebuyers this year."

A large majority of Canadians (83 per cent) remain positive that homeownership is a good investment. While the proportion is down slightly from 85 per cent in 2008 and from the all time high of 90 per cent in 2006, it is 10 points stronger than it was a decade ago (72 per cent).

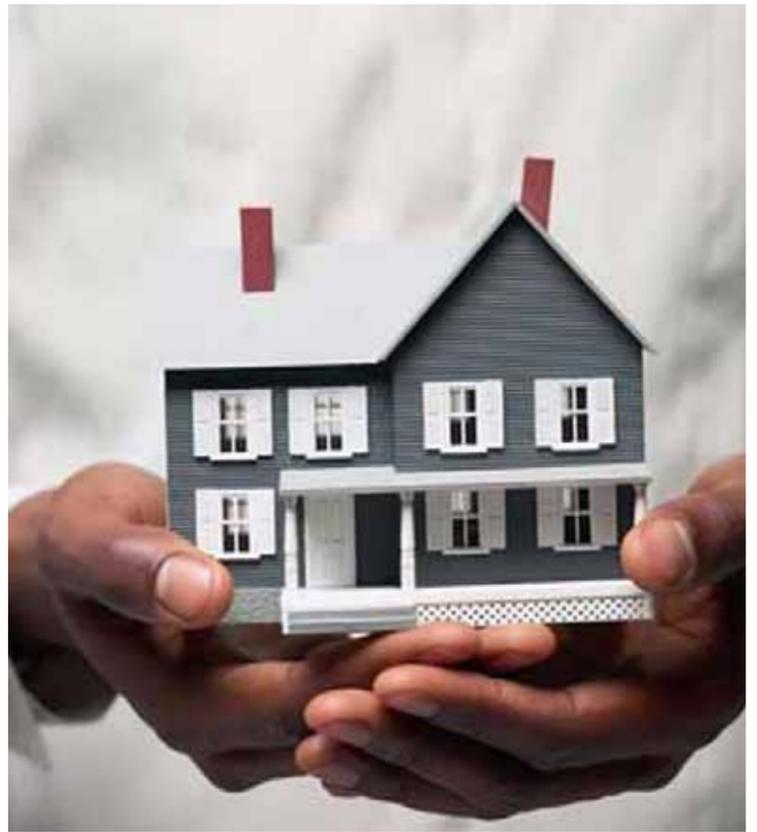
Among those who intend to buy, three-in-ten say favourable housing price is a major reason driving their decision. In a marked change from last year, 54 per cent of Canadians believe housing prices will be lower in 2009, up from 31 per cent in 2008. Similarly, the study showed 14 per cent of Canadians believe their home has lost value in the last two years. Of these, most (54 per cent) think it will take three-to-

five years for their home to recover its value.

"Low mortgage rates and favourable housing prices are influencing home purchase intentions this year and may be the reason why more Canadians are poised to purchase over the next two years," added Leggett.

The primary reason stated by homeowners not planning to purchase a home is that they are

	Now is a Buyers Market	Market Intentions to Buy
BC	78%	26%
Alberta	72%	35%
Sask/Man	34%	25%
Ontario	73%	30%
Quebec	52%	22%
Atlantic Canada	58%	25%



content with the home they have (sixty per cent). Job loss/employment factors (eight per cent) as well as general concerns about the economy (six per cent) also influenced people's decisions not to buy a home.

RBC is the largest residential mortgage lender in Canada. As the country's number one source of financial advice on homeownership, RBC conducts consumer



surveys as one way to provide insight to Canadians about the marketplace in which they live.

These are some of the findings of an RBC poll conducted by Ipsos Reid between January 6 to 9, 2009. The online survey is based on a randomly selected representative sample of 2,026 adult Canadians. With a representative sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ±2.2 percentage points, 19

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Appeasers of Sri Lankan atrocities go berserk over blog

by Kotravan

Robert Mackey of New York Times is now the journalist to be continuously vilified by appeasers of the Sri Lankan state atrocities. Robert Mackey wrote a post titled, "Is the World Ignoring Sri Lanka's Srebrenica?" in The New York Times News blog, The Lede on Apr 17th.

Blogger Pradeep Jeganathan in a post has accused Mackey of being "illogical" and "disingenuous" in making the Srebrenica comparison as it is a "deliberate civilian massacre, and has been deemed to be genocide, by the International Court of Justice."

Government of Sri Lanka and its supporters say there is no mass killings taking place in the country. And the appeasers of Sri Lankan state atrocities have been using from pen to gun to silence the critics of the government.

In January this year, Lasantha Wickramatunga, editor of a Sri Lankan newspaper called the Sunday Leader, was assassinated on his way to work by two gunmen riding motorcycles. The Leader's investigative reporting had been fiercely critical of the government and of the conduct of its war against Tamil separatists.

Renowned author Arundhati Roy and singer M.I.A Maya Arulpragasam are continued to be demonized on Sri Lankan websites, including that of the Sri Lankan army for speaking about Tamil civilian plight.

In his response to Pradeep Jeganathan, author of the post "Is the World Ignoring Sri Lanka's Srebrenica?", Robert Mackey



Srebrenica - by Yasin Kocak

says:

About my "motives"

I posted a further clarification of what the question asked in the headline of the blog post I wrote means to many journalists and aid workers who were in Bosnia at the time that Srebrenica was allowed to fall. You can read that addendum to my post, and accept that the word means different things to different people, or not, but I find your wild accusation that some sort of racism is behind what I wrote really baseless. You really have no idea what my background or perspective is, and yet you feel comfortable launching into this personal and insulting attack on me and hinting about my "motives."

Failure of the United Nations to protect the U.N.-designated "safe areas"

People who were very close witnesses to the failure of the United Nations to protect the U.N.-designated "safe areas" in Bosnia may have a different perspective on what happened there than people who were not, but to

assume that the only possible meaning of the word Srebrenica now is shorthand for "genocide" is beneath someone of your education.

Against the killing of innocent civilians

I have one bias here: against the killing of innocent civilians in any war zone. And maybe a second one: against the allowing of it by the international community. But having grown up partly in Northern Ireland and lived and worked in former Yugoslavia with refugees from the conflict during it, I am aware that it is hard to say anything about a conflict like this without being misunderstood by some or most people deeply invested in it.

Different meanings for many different people

Lastly Srebrenica is not in fact a code word for genocide: it is a place, with a history that has many different meanings for many different people. If that were not so, it would not have ended up being the site of a multifaceted tragedy.

Tamils of Dharavi protest Sri Lanka onslaught

Tamil residents of Dharavi - in Mumbai, demonstrated and shouted slogans against the Sri Lanka military onslaught and forced eviction of Tamils from their homes on April 25th. They burned posters of Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa during the protest.

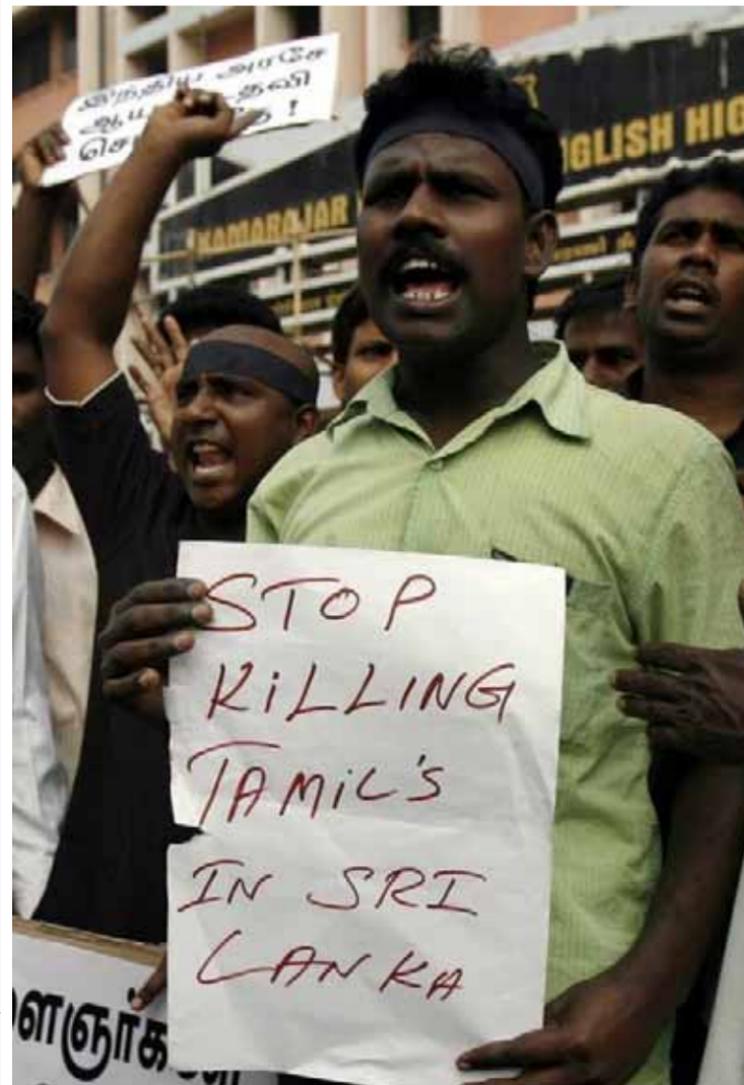
According to A Ganesh Nadar of Rediff.com, "Dharavi's main population consists of Tamilians who've migrated to Mumbai from their home state.

These Tamilians have import-

ed their village atmosphere into their new place of residence. Dharavi is a closed society. Even the non-Tamilians have learnt to speak Tamil to survive here.

There are some Tamilians who have been here for years and still don't know a single word of Hindi. They don't need to know. They live and work in Dharavi where the national language is Tamil."

"Tamil" is described as the "National language" of Dharavi, an urban slum ward in Mumbai.



[in Dharavi, Mumbai April 25, 2009-Reuters pic]

Bundles of joy amidst the horrific Sri Lanka war zone

Twin babies were delivered on 16 April 2009 by a dedicated Health team, Regional Director of Health Services (RDHS) in the area said in a media note. The babies were delivered by caesarean section successfully with very minimum facilities.

The makeshift-hospital in Vanni is struggling to cope with very minimal facilities and shortage of medicines amidst continuing Sri Lanka military onslaught. [pictures by RDHS]



Lanka wants LTTE to allow eviction of Tamil civilians into internment camps

[An awareness campaign in London in April]



by T. Earakan

Independent analysts say Sri Lanka Government wants to continue the agenda of forcefully evicting Tamil civilians and detain them in internment camps without livelihood, under various guises. Government is also looking to lure

international loot in the form of aid for the internment camps as the economy is in the doldrums amidst massive military spending and rampant corruption. Towards this objective, Sri Lanka continues its calls to "allow civilian movement", these analysts pointed out.

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Get the Dirt on Germs

By Mithura Anandarajah, PT
Registered Physiotherapist

With the recent outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus (human swine flu), it becomes exceeding important to gather the facts and act accordingly. While it is important to be aware of the facts, risks and prevention methods, it is also important not to add to the hysteria that can result. There are stories of Mexicans being discriminated against, detained and quarantined. In several countries, pig livestock have been killed despite the fact that the virus is not transmitted by food. Eating properly cooked pork or pork products is safe. The H1N1 flu virus is spread the same way as regular seasonal influenza. Influenza and other respiratory infections are transmitted from person to person when germs enter the nose and/or throat.

What are germs? The word "germs" is a general term for different types of tiny organisms. Bacteria and viruses are examples of two different types of germs. Bacteria are virtually everywhere in our environment and make up 60 per cent of the living matter on earth. Of the billions of types of bacteria only about 50 are known to cause infection. Viruses cause far more illnesses than bad bacte-

ria because they spread more easily.

If more than one person in your family has the same sickness, odds are it is a viral infection. Cold and flu viruses invade our cells and rapidly grow in number causing symptoms like runny nose, cough, aches and sore throats. Sometimes these viruses mutate or change in composition and new viruses emerge. Such is the case with the current H1N1 flu virus which traditionally was a respiratory disease of pigs.

All influenza infections can be dangerous, especially for the very old, young or populations that are immune-deficient or compro-

mised. However, infection prevention measures can help protect you and others if this virus does continue to spread. Did you know that perhaps the most important thing that you can do to stop the spread of germs is frequent and thorough handwashing? Eighty percent of germs are spread through your hands. For example, if you touch a door knob with the flu virus on it and then you touch your mouth, you could then get infected.

Handwashing is easy to learn, cheap and incredibly effective at stopping the spread of disease-causing germs. Do it several times a day, before and after meals, after use of the bathroom, after blowing your nose or coughing. If you are sharing toys or equip-

ment with others, routinely wash your hands and also sanitize the equipment with the use of a disinfectant.

When washing your hands it is important to remove rings, apply a small amount of liquid soap and rub your hands together for about 20 seconds. The mechanical act of rubbing washes away dirt and grease that the germs can stick to. Rinse your hands thoroughly and dry your hands, preferably with a single use paper towel. If you do use a hand towel, change it daily. Use hand lotion if your hands are dry. Teach your children how to wash their hands properly.

Another important reminder is that you should avoid sneezing or coughing into your hand. It is better to cough or sneeze into your arm. If you do use a tissue, dispose of it appropriately and then wash your hands. Keep your fingers away from your nose or hand. In your home, make sure



that common surfaces are kept clean and germ free. The kitchen counter and sink is the place in the household where most of the germs exist. Avoid sharing personal drinks and food. If you are sick, avoid going to work or crowds, where the germs can be easily spread.

Following these guidelines will limit the spread of this infection and other seasonal influenzas. They make good practice now during this outbreak, but also throughout the year. Knowledge is your best defense against the spread of the H1N1 flu virus. For more information please review the updates distributed by the Public Health Agency of Canada (www.publichealth.gc.ca).



Mithura Anandarajah, PT, CAFCI
Clinical Director / Physiotherapist

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Indian Film stars and Politicians

by Kanayalal Raina

What is the similarity between cine stars and politicians? Both sell dreams. Everything about movies is generally big --- glamour, action and eventually the triumph of the good over the evil. One has just to remember the dialogue: "Rishte main to hum tumhare baap lagte hain naam hai Shahenshah" Almost all of us respond by saying: Wah! Wah!! So is the case with our political leaders. They have readymade solutions to end our miseries: "Garibi hatao." It comes in handy for them in one election after the other. They promise to turn their constituencies into the lands of plenty and prosperity. When in power they hold no less attention than film actors.

They enjoy every moment of it. So do those who hang around them. However, there is a big difference between politicians and our celluloid heroes. The former actually control the levers of governance. The latter do so only on the screen. By the sheer force of their media they nevertheless acquire a larger-than-life image among the people at large. In the process, it seems, they believe that they can click in real life (read politics) as well. They try their luck in the elections. While they have done extremely well in the polls and afterwards in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh their performance in the post-election period has generally left much to be desired in the north of the country. Who can ever forget that M.G. Ramachandran (MGR) had a long spell as the Tamil Nadu Chief



Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and Leader of AIADMK Party Ms. Jayalalitha

Minister? Jayalalitha continues to reflect in his glory. In Andhra Pradesh N.T. Rama Rao had shattered the charisma of Indira Gandhi in an extraordinary development. Thriving on his screen image he had swayed the masses.

Only such miracles could possibly break the Congress stranglehold. This was what many conventional opposition politicians had said then. Even these days the Tamil and Telugu politics significantly rotates around them. Don't we hear of Chiranjeevi and his Praja Rajyam Party (PRP) in Andhra Pradesh nowadays? There is Vijayakant and his Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK) in Tamil Nadu. A notable exception so far is the country's highest paid actor, Rajnikant. Wooed by the topmost politicians he has not yet made up his mind to join their ranks. In his own

words: "While no one can stop me from entering the political arena, nobody can force me to do so as well. Legal action will be initiated against those who use my name for political ends." How should one interpret a statement like this? Evidently it implies that as and when Rajnikant joins politics he would do it with the intention of playing a long stint rather than quitting after a brief flirta-

tion. In our part of the country, however, the majority of film actors have not been consistent in their role as politicians. They have come, won the elections and then faded away. Dharmendra and Govinda are the latest to join this category. Amitabh Bachchan's political stint has been an utter failure. Whatever his standing in the Hindi cinema he has ended up

spending his time in the company of second-rung politicians. The list also includes Vyjanthimala and Rajesh Khanna. Shatrughan Sinha, Raj Babbar, Jayaprada, Jaya Bachchan and Hema Malini are still striving to gain political respectability despite having spent considerable time in their new field. Only actor who has won overall political acclaim in the past is Sunil Dutt.



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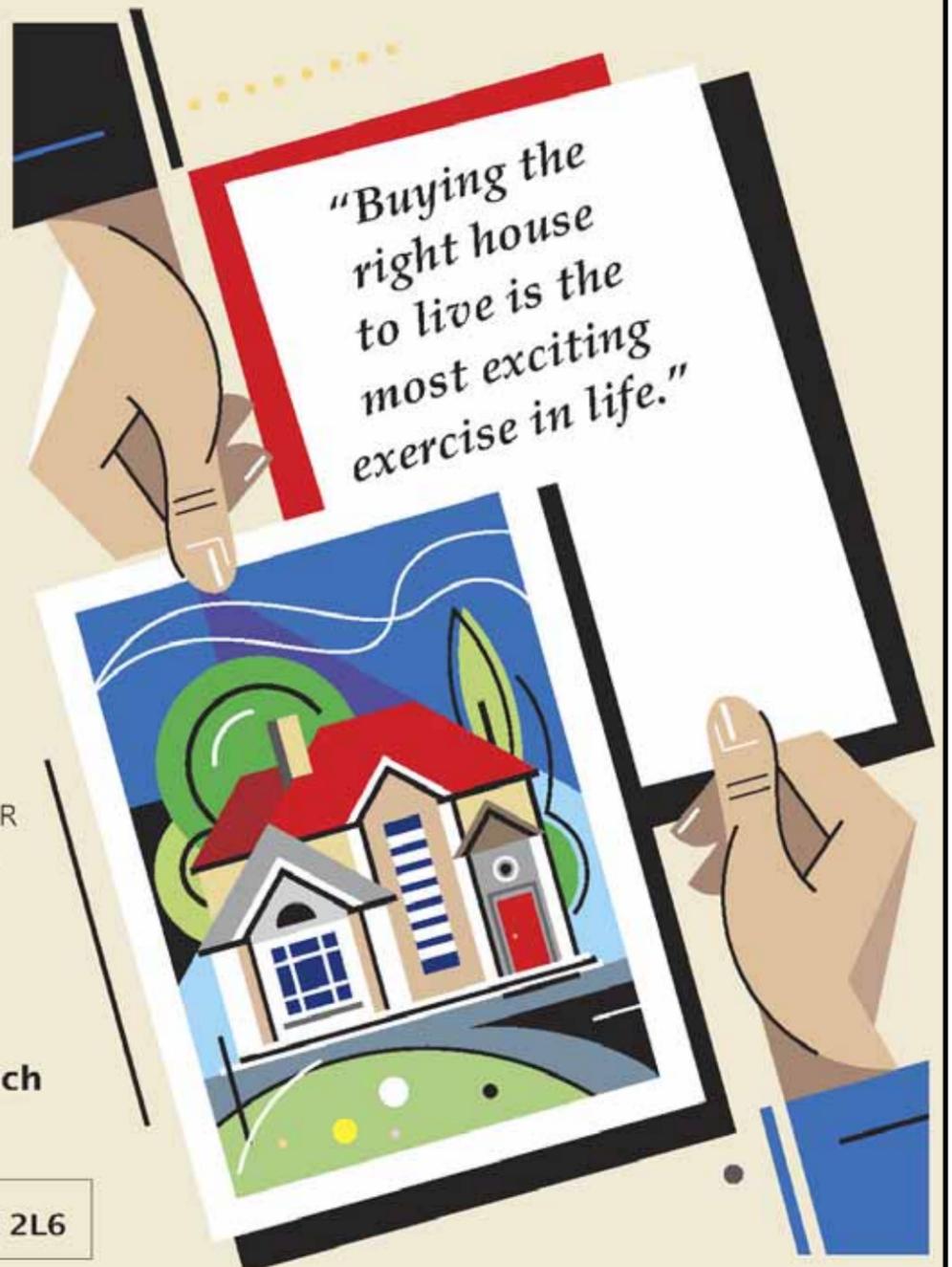
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Subramaniam Kanthaswamy

The sixth century BC is regarded as a chapter of exceptional interest in the story of mankind. Mighty empires flourished but that was the least part of the glory. Much more significant were the historic conquests made in the realm of the spirit. It was an age of intellectual ferment, of heart-searching and discontent, of longing and quest. But it was also an age of fruitful achievement, when the discovery of new values brought solace to the human heart. This was the glorious epoch of Gautama Buddha (Circa 563 - 483 BC) Mahavira (Circa 599 - 527 BC) and Confucius (Circa 551 - 479 BC.)

The life and teachings of Gautama the Buddha have been a source of inspiration to millions in many countries for over two thousand five hundred years. Edwin Arnold in his book on the Buddha has fittingly called him the "Light of Asia". The spiritual and moral forces generated by Buddha have strengthened and enriched Hinduism and helped to wean it from perversions which had set in at that time.

The word 'Buddha' means 'the Awakened or Enlightened One.' Known as the 'Buddha' only after his enlightenment at the age of thirty-five, Gautama is also respectfully called Sakhyamuni ('sage of the sakyas'), Siddhartha ('he who has accomplished'), and Tathagata ('he who has arrived at the truth' or 'thus come' or 'thus gone')

Gautama Siddhartha was the son of Suddhodhana who ruled the Sakhya clan from the town of Kapilavastu, in present-day Uttar Pradesh in India. Siddhartha was born on the full moon day in the month of Vaishaka circa 563 B.C. Legend has it that Queen Maha Maya Devi was travelling from Kapilavastu to her parents home in Devadaha. During the journey the Queen seeing the natural beauty of Lumbini Grove, in modern day Nepal, decided to take rest and there under a mighty sal tree brought forth the future Buddha. Lumbini soon became a place of pilgrimage. Emperor Asoka visited Lumbini in 249 BC and erected a commemorative stone pillar. The day of his birth is widely celebrated by Buddhist as Vesak.

The GREAT RENUNCIATION

Suddhodhana went to great lengths to surround Siddhartha's life with all kinds of luxuries and pleasures because he was haunted by the fear that his beloved son might renounce the world as had been prophesied. After marrying Yasodhara, Siddhartha lived with her for a period of about ten years before the birth of their son Rahula. According to some commentators it was the birth of Rahula that spurred the prince to become an ascetic. But there is a more traditional and popular theory that attributes his renunciation to his seeing a decrepit old man, a diseased man, then a corpse; and finally, a wandering religious monk with a serene countenance. These Four Passing Sights lead Siddhartha to recognise the reality of death and suffering, the cyclical nature of human existence (samsara) and the impermanence of all mundane things. As he started brooding his heart was filled with the desire to emulate the wandering monk who radiated such peace and happiness. He was consumed with a burning passion to unravel the mystery of suffering, its nature and origin as well as its total elimination. His mind made up, the prince exclaimed: "I must go forth on the Great Retirement this very day."

Siddhartha called Channa, the charioteer, and ordered him to saddle a horse. Channa selected the steed, Kanthaka, and drew the girth around him. Giving up a life of princely comforts, riches and security, Siddhartha Gautama was on his way to the adventurous quest into the great unknown. This event has been called the Great Renunciation for it entailed an inward journey into the hidden depths of his psyche - the Bodhisattva (one whose essence is perfect wisdom or one destined for enlightenment) full of the joy of Renunciation, went forth to achieve the greater joy of Enlightenment.

The theme of the Great Renunciation has been narrated by poets of every age, but never with such matchless literary skill as Ashvaghosa has achieved in his Pali classic Buddhacharita. In sculpture, the Great Renunciation is described in some of the outstanding reliefs at Sanchi and Amaravati.

The Joy of Enlightenment and Renunciation



On the night of the full moon in the month of Vaishakha 531 B.C., thirty-five years after his birth, Siddhartha settled himself under a spreading Pippala tree (now called the Bodhi tree) and resolved: "Never from this seat will I stir, until I have attained the supreme and absolute wisdom."

As he sat in deep meditation, Mara, and his men, the personifications of doubt, confusion and temptation, assailed him with terrific force to distract him from his purpose. Gautama then touched the earth, calling it to bear witness to the countless lifetimes of virtue that led him to this place of enlightenment. The earth shook confirming the truth of his words.

Gautama had only one companion to sustain him - the tree above him. The struggle went on until the seeker of the truth emerged victorious and attained Enlightenment (Nirvana.) Nirvana is the extinguishing of one's ego and self in the realisation of one's true nature. As the tree showered soft blossoms upon him in his moment of enlightenment, the Buddha woke up from his trance, walked a short distance and stood gazing with infinite gratitude upon the tree that had sheltered him. To his followers it became the holiest tree in the world. And after his Great Departure it became their main object of worship. For many centuries the figure of the Buddha himself was not deified and homage was paid only to such symbols as his foot-prints, his begging-bowl, and above all the Bodhi Tree.

The present Bodhi Tree at Gaya is most probably the fifth descendant of the original tree. It still performs a very important role to Buddhists of all traditions, being viewed as the actual Buddha by some; it is a reminder and an inspiration, a symbol of peace, of the Master's enlightenment and of the ultimate. There is not one Buddhist monument or temple, where its majestic branches do not beckon the pilgrim. At Baharhut, Sanchi, Sarnath, Amaravati, Nalanda and Nagarjunkonda enormous amount of labour has been spent in the representation of this holy tree in stone.

A rock edict records Asoka's visit to Bodhi Gaya in the 3rd century B.C. where he erected a shrine to commemorate the sacred spot. Under the Bodhi tree, there is still a stone seat, the Vajrasana, which has an inscription of that period. The Mahabodhi Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, stands east of the Bodhi Tree. This sacred edifice is like a grand banner unfurled by time to proclaim to the world the pious efforts of the Buddha to solve the knots of human miseries, to ascend above worldly problems and to attain transcendental peace through wisdom, good conduct and disciplined life.

As a Buddha, an awakened one, he delivered his first sermon to his five former companions at Sarnath, near Varanasi. He taught them the four Noble Truths and the Noble eight-fold Path leading to the cessation of all suffering. This event is known as the Dharmachakra Pravartin, or the setting into motion of the Wheel

of Law. The Asoka pillar at Sarnath, with its famous capital of four lions, was erected at the place where the Buddha established his first Sangha, the Buddhist congregation. The lion capital of this pillar is the national emblem of the Republic of India.

The Four Noble Truths:

*The truth of suffering (dukkha), all existence is suffering.

*The truth of the cause of suffering (samudaya), the true origination of suffering has been discovered.

*The truth of the end of suffering (nirodha), the stopping of that suffering is possible.

*The truth of the path that leads to the end of suffering (magga). The way leading to the stopping of suffering is the Eight-fold path.

The Buddha expounded the four virtues conducive to a healthy and happy life: (1) Saddha:

faith and confidence in moral, spiritual and intellectual values; (2) Sila: abstain from destroying and harming life, from stealing and cheating, from adultery, from falsehood, and from intoxicating drinks and drugs; (3) Caga: practise charity, generosity, without attachment and craving for wealth; (4) Panna: develop wisdom which lead to the complete destruction of suffering, to lead to realisation.

It was the night of the full moon, in the month of Vaishakha in Kusinagar. The hour was approaching when the Buddha, having kept the wheel of Dharma in motion for forty years, was to depart from existence and embrace the state of annihilation. He was surrounded by his sorrowing disciples "Where shall we seek solace, Blessed One?" they cried. The Buddha consoled them by saying, "You shall still have the four noble truths and the way of righteousness. He advised with feeling of holy reverence and awe, viz. the place where he was born (Lumbini grove), the place where he reached enlightenment (Bodhi-Gaya), the place where he first taught the Dharma and where the Buddhist Sangha came into existence (Deer park in Sarnath near Varanasi), and the place of his final extinction (Kusinagar).

What the Buddha discovered will always remain a mystery to the unenlightened and hence for them it became a subject of endless speculation and debate. The Buddha frowned upon all philosophical questions that had no relevance to ultimate Emancipation. He always refused to discuss the question of the existence of God or Creator. Theistic systems advocate that man should demonstrate his utter subservience to God through sacrifice and prayer. In Buddhism, however, there is no God who has to be appeased or bribed in order to win favours. The onus is wholly on man to cleanse himself of all traces of karma and to realise nirvana. The Buddha eschewed all forms of dependence and stressed the importance of self-reliance. In his words it is incumbent upon man to free himself of the desire to be helped by gurus, priests, avatars, astrologers and intercessors. Equally deplorable is the worship of statues and pictures of the Buddha and Hindu deities.

Contd. in Page 21...

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Sri Lankan Tamils and India's 'Responsibility to Protect'

by M.G.Devasahayam

ADMK supremo, J. Jayalitha has set the cat amongst the pigeons when she declared the other day: "If a government that listens to me is formed at the Centre, I will take action for the dispatch of the Indian army to the island nation and create a separate Tamil Eelam." This demand had been raised earlier by her alliance partners - Dr. Ramadass of PMK and Vaiko of MDMK.

[All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) chief Jayalitha, center, holds hands with Communist Party of India leader A.B.Bardhan, left and Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Prakash Karat during an election rally in Chennai, India, Thursday, April 16, 2009-AP pic]



Prof. K.Anbazhagan, the intellectual face of DMK, responded: "Tamils are being destroyed in Sri Lanka. The place is full of widows who have lost their husbands, widowers who have lost their wives, and people who have lost their arms and legs. This has been going on for a long time. Sinhalese are making Tamils into heaps of corpse. But theirs and ours are different countries. The laws of that land are different. We cannot intervene".

He was only echoing what UPA Government, Congress party and Chief Minister Karunanidhi have been repeating ad nauseam. This is the concept that carries the benign nomenclature of "sovereignty" wherein the international system is structured to entitle states to impunity within their borders. Sovereignty enables states to determine for themselves whether human rights are indeed universal, or whether international standards and conventions can be omitted from their jurisprudence and conduct.

What does this mean in the context of Sri Lanka? That the Tamils there are urchins and orphans to be deserted on the streets and cast to the vultures and wolves to destroy and decimate as they wish? Can a civilised society tolerate this?

On similar lines UN Secretary General Kofi Annan had posed a challenge to the Millennium General Assembly in April 2000, asking "If humanitarian intervention is indeed an unacceptable assault on sovereignty, how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica - to gross and systematic violations of human rights that offend every precept of our common humanity?" This challenge was the catalyst for the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which was launched in September 2000, and published a report in December 2001

introducing and championing the principle of the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P). Commission was hosted by Canada and headed by Gareth Evans, former Australian Foreign Minister.

Heads of state and government from 150 countries, meeting as the UN General Assembly, unanimously accepted not only that sovereign states have a very explicit responsibility to protect their own people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, but when they manifestly fail in that responsibility - as a result of either incapacity or ill-will - the responsibility falls upon the wider international community to take whatever action is appropriate, including in the last resort, and if the Security Council agrees, military action. This was contained in Articles 138 and 139 of the UN World Summit Outcome Document 2005. This commitment has been reaffirmed in UN Security Council Resolution 1674.

According to Gareth Evans, R2P is intended to apply to mass atrocity crimes, which refer to "genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity." State sovereignty implies responsibility, and the primary responsibility for the protection of its people lies with the state itself. Where a population is suffering serious harm, as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the international R2P.

There is a 'Just Cause Threshold' for military intervention under R2P - large scale loss of life, actual or apprehended, with genocidal intent or not, which is the product either of deliberate state action, or state neglect or inability to act, or a failed state situation; or large scale 'ethnic cleansing', actual or apprehended, whether carried

out by killing, forced expulsion, acts of terror or rape.

Under Article 24 of the UN Charter, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security. It has the power to impose sanctions, establish peace keeping missions, and authorize military action. As a signatory to the UN Charter, 1948 Genocide Convention, and the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949, India is bound to invoke the UN Security Council to halt the crimes against humanity and gross violation of human rights and civil liberties taking place in Sri Lanka. When Security Council fails or is prevented from performing this critical role concerned countries acquire the right under R2P.

Sri Lanka situation is the ideal one to invoke the R2P. It has been horrendous and conscience-shocking crying out for action. The world Tamil Diaspora is wait-

ing in distress and agony but the UN Security Council is merely indulging in meaningless semantics and bureaucratic procedures. China is reportedly blocking all efforts to even bring this issue on the discussion agenda of the Security Council.

It is clear that in Sri Lanka UN Security Council has failed to discharge its responsibility of protecting innocent civilians in 'conscience-shocking situations that has been crying out for action'. It is imperative therefore that India as the concerned state has to consider 'other means' including military action to meet the gravity and urgency of the situation.

As *parens patriae* (parent of his country) for the Tamils in Sri Lanka, being the original homeland for the Tamils, India has an added responsibility. In this capacity India has the moral right, the legal obligation, and the standing under international law

to intervene directly and bring the genocide to an end as per Professor Francis Boyle, an international law expert.

In the event, Ms. Jayalitha and her alliance partners are on a strong wicket as far as India's direct intervention to halt the 'racist genocide' and evolving a just and fair political solution to bring this long-festering conflict to an end.

As to the 'creation of a separate Tamil Eelam', the Sinhalese seem to be facilitating it more than the Tamils. How else does one interpret the Western Province election results wherein the Sinhala people have given full mandate to Mahinda Rajapaksa to go ahead in the war against 'Tamil terrorism'. The same can be seen in any forthcoming elections under the Sri Lankan state system.

With a 'military victory' of Sinhalese over Tamils achieved by an Army General who has openly declared that 'Sri Lanka belong to the Sinhalese' and near total political polarization of Sinhalese vs Tamils engineered by a President who wants to 'rule for ever' with that linguistic majority in tow, 'Tamil Eelam' looks like an agenda that has self-generated itself! [www.transCurrents.com]

(The writer is a former Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, who had held many important positions nationally and been in a very high position in the TN State administration, before retirement. Presently chairs the Chennai Intellectuals' Forum and was a member of the Chennai team that met with President Rajapaksa to discuss possible power sharing mechanisms as a solution to the present conflict.)

Jayalitha's AIDMK ahead of Karunanidhi's DMK in Tamil Nadu Elections

By Siva Sivapragasam

Jayalitha Jayaram, former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and one time South Indian film world's glamour queen, is obviously a strong fighter when it comes to electioneering. She has outwitted the current Chief Minister and seasoned octogenarian politician Muthuvel Karunanidhi over the Sri Lankan question which has taken centre-stage in the Tamil Nadu elections to be held next week.

She has dropped a bombshell on election platforms recently that if her party is elected she will help Sri Lankan Tamils to carve out a separate Tamil Eelam state in Sri Lanka and if necessary pressurize the Centre to send Indian troops to Sri Lanka to achieve this. Karuna-

nidhi's response for this was to go on a fast for a couple of hours in Chennai demanding an immediate cease-fire in the fighting in Sri Lanka.

Karunanidhi's fast has been termed as a farce by Jayalitha and her partners who ridiculed it by saying that he began the fast after a heavy breakfast and ended it just in time for his mid-day meal.

The heavy fighting that has been going on in the Mullaitivu district resulting in the heavy civilian casualties has become a highly emotional issue in the Tamil Nadu elections due next week. The allegation leveled against Karunanidhi and the DMK by his opponents stem from the fact that he has not used his party position in the Centre to

pressurize the Indian Government to act strongly against the Sri Lankan Government to halt the war.

They allege that his desire for power and position made him to soft-pedal the issue with the Centre. Jayalitha is scoring on this with the help of her partners like Vaiko, Dr. Ramadoss and Nedumaran who are powerful speakers at election rallies and who can sway the masses. As at now, Jayalitha seems to be cutting an edge over Karunanidhi.

With a few days to go for the elections much depends on the events that would unfold in the war arena. Whatever said, the five times Chief Minister Karunanidhi is facing an uphill task to win the elections this time.

Tamils and Ceylon in the 1950's - From archives of The Times, UK:

Decades have gone by, but violence perpetrated by those with the Sinhala Sri Lanka only agenda continues through today under various guises.

Today "War on Terror" and even a "Humanitarian rescue" are being carried out by the Sri Lankan state to with the uprooting of Tamils. - compiled by K.T. Kumaran



A Tamil passenger taken out of the vehicle and being beaten up - May 1958

TAMILS' PROTEST MARCH TO BE BANNED

MR. BANDARANAIKE'S WARNING

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT
COLOMBO, MAY 30

The Prime Minister, Mr. Bandaranaike, said at his Press conference to-day that if a situation arose which demanded his presence here he would cancel his journey to London to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' conference.

He did not say he was expecting trouble, and if he was he did not indicate what kind of difficulty he was expecting, but there is no doubt that what he had in mind was the possibility of internal trouble arising from disagreement about the Bill to be presented in Parliament on June 5 to make Sinhalese the sole official language of Ceylon. The Prime Minister said he trusted the Tamils and other minorities would not plunge into hasty or undemocratic action as a protest against the Bill, which has now been practically reduced to the one clause which says that Sinhalese will henceforth be the official language, and that the changeover should be completed by December, 1960.

Mr. Bandaranaike said he would not allow the march on Trincomalee, now being planned by Tamils as a prelude to the convention they propose to hold on August 18 and 19. There was too much tension in Trincomalee and such a march was not in the public interest, but he certainly would not object to a convention at, or march to, any other place.

6 June 1956

Imperial and Foreign HOOLIGANISM IN COLOMBO

ATTACKS ON TAMIL SATYAGRAHIS

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT
COLOMBO, JUNE 5

Violence has been occurring in Colombo all day. It started this morning at Galle Face, the long stretch of green between the House of Representatives and the sea where about 200 Tamils performed *satyagraha* by merely sitting on the grass.

The House of Representatives was barricaded with steel girders and a ring of policemen guarded the precincts and entrances from 6 a.m. The galleries and precincts of the House were closed to the public when it met at 2 p.m. The chief business was the presentation of the Bill to make Sinhalese sole official language of Ceylon.

At about 9 a.m. the *satyagrahis* at Galle Face were attacked by Sinhalese who had gathered round them. One man's ear was bitten and others were attacked with sticks, bamboo, and stones. The *satyagrahis* did not retaliate. Two Sinhalese members of Parliament who were passing tried but failed to persuade the crowd to disperse.

Three Tamil members of Parliament were among those who were assaulted. Two had head injuries from stones and the third is in hospital with an injured leg. At one stage the crowd pushed five Tamils into a lake beside the House of Representatives and another into the sea. One man was saved from drowning in the lake by three Sinhalese.

POLICE MOBBED

The crowd at Galle Face grew continually. Attempts by the police to disperse it repeatedly failed. When police entered the crowd brandishing batons they were assaulted and jeered at, and the officers who made arrests were mobbed.

Shortly after noon the mob surged towards the House of Representatives and challenged left-wing members (who have advocated parity of status for Sinhalese and Tamil) to come outside. Mr. Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister, then appeared on the steps and appealed to the crowd to disperse. Few heeded his appeal.

At 2 p.m. Tamil shopkeepers were putting up their shutters and groups of people were parading the city shouting slogans. The violence continued. The 200 *satyagrahis* were stoned and assaulted with sticks, and other Tamils were assaulted in different parts of the city. Buses and cars were stoned, and hooligans boarded buses in certain spots and beat Tamil passengers. Police charged the unruly crowds with batons several times, and a number of persons were taken into custody.

Military units in armoured cars and trucks and on motor-cycles staged a flag march through the city after nightfall. Questions were asked in Parliament at the end of the day.

A statement by the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs to-night said: "There were a few sporadic incidents of assault and the like, but they were readily handled. It is hardly necessary to emphasize that hooliganism will not be tolerated, and that acts of hooliganism indulged in by miscreants trying to take advantage of the situation will be most rigorously dealt with."

The 200 Tamils who offered *satyagraha* did so as a protest against the Bill to make Sinhalese the sole official language, but not all those who took the opposing side were partisans in the language issue. They were mostly hooligans, who saw an opportunity to vent their racial spleen.

Parliament adjourned at 6.30 p.m., but the big crowd outside was still there at 8 p.m. In the later part of the evening the streets were quieter.

28th May 1956

Imperial and Foreign CALL TO CEYLON TAMILS

PROTEST MEASURES PLANNED

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT
COLOMBO, MAY 27

The working committee of the Federal Party, which has 10 out of the 16 seats in the Ceylon House of Representatives which represent Tamil-speaking constituencies, decided to-day to call on all Ceylon Tamils to offer a *satyagraha* on June 5, the day on which the "Sinhalese only" Bill will be presented to Parliament by the Government. The committee also decided to call a *hartal* in the Tamil-speaking areas later.

Another of the committee's decisions is the holding of a convention of Tamil-speaking people in Trincomalee on August 18 and 19. Processions will march to Trincomalee from the Tamil-speaking areas to attend the convention. The Federal Party's decisions represent the first stage in the resistance which the Tamils are threatening against the Government's intention of making Sinhalese the official language of Ceylon.

CONCESSIONS DROPPED

The first draft of the "Sinhalese only" Bill provided for non-Sinhalese-speaking persons to take Government and other examinations in English or Tamil until 1967, and for local bodies in Tamil-speaking areas to carry on business in Tamil if agreed by a simple majority. Opposition to these two concessions came from the Government parliamentary group, however, and the Bill was amended to provide for the use of Tamil by a local body only if it was decided to do so by a two-thirds majority. The concession for examinations was also amended, leaving it to the discretion of "the Minister concerned" to allow persons to take examinations in Sinhalese or another language.

For weeks now there have been threats and counter-threats by Sinhalese and Tamils over this Bill; unless the Government's measures are acceptable to the Tamils (which they certainly will not be unless there is a sudden change of heart in the Government) there is no telling to what lengths fanatics on both sides may go.

TWO-DAY FAST

In the vanguard of the struggle for "Sinhalese only" throughout the island has been a society of Bhikkhus (Buddhist monks). Statements published in the newspapers recently on behalf of this society claim that the Bhikkhus do not want the Tamils to be denied their just rights. But the fanaticism, especially on the part of Sinhalese, who outnumber the Tamils by six to one, still goes on. Only last Thursday a lecturer in economics at the University of Ceylon began a fast to death on the steps of the House of Representatives, which he said he intended to observe unless the Prime Minister gave him an assurance that the Bill would not allow the Tamils the two concessions already referred to. On Friday he was joined by two Bhikkhus, who said they would fast to death with him for the same reason. All three gave up their fast yesterday morning after the Prime Minister had assured the lecturer that he would be given an opportunity of putting his views before the Government parliamentary group at its meeting to-morrow.

The attitude of the Prime Minister, Mr. Bandaranaike, to the controversy is that the country gave his party a clear mandate to make Sinhalese the only official language—a debatable point, for the United National Party, which was severely defeated at the recent election, also went to the polls with the promise that they would make Sinhalese the only official language.

31 May 1956



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By: Kanayalal Raina

Throwing shoes on top leaders has now become a fashion amidst the disgruntled audience as witnessed during last 4 months. It seems shoe-throwing will pick up currency in the days to come. The "SHOE" is no doubt on its way to become the ultimate symbol of protest. The culture has caught the popular imagination of the people and we have to wait-who will be the next?

Shoes are the new addition to the protest arsenal, may be because it is the handiest weapon available to the general public. Going by its usual shape, shoe is quite a throwable object and throwing of the same at a political celebrity is of more recent vintage.

On December 14, 2008 Iraqi television journalist Muntadher al-Zaidi famously hurled his shoe at the then US president George W. Bush in Baghdad. Zaidi immediately became a hero in anti-American circles, Iranian officials hailed his gesture as a mark of Islamic courage. He is currently cooling his heels behind the bars as he was subsequently imprisoned for three years for the uncivilized act. Zaidi seems to have inspired entire tribe of shoe-throwers.

On February 2, 2009, a German student hurled a shoe at Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao as

A new tribe of shoe-throwers

he was speaking at Cambridge University. Mr. Wen called it a "despicable act." The protestor was charged with a public order offence. In March 2009 a shoe was hurled at Iran president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as he waved to the crowd from an open-top car during a motorcade procession through the Iranian city Urumiye. The Israeli ambassador to Sweden, Benny Dagan was also hit by a shoe thrown by a woman in February 2009 when he was addressing an audience in Stockholm University.

The show-throwing act entered the Indian protest circuit on April 7, 2009 when a journalist tossed his shoe at India's Home Minister, Palaniappan Chidambaram after a confrontational exchange during a news conference in Delhi. The shoe, lobbed underhand, passed Chidambaram within sniffing distance as he deftly swerved before the missile could hit him. The Minister thus got included in a prominent line of world leaders who have been subjected to a shoe attack - a cowardly and depraved phenomenon. The journalist, a veteran correspondent with one of India's largest newspapers the Hindi daily Dainik Jagran, flung his shoe for being left unhappy at the Home Minister's explanation for the CBI giving clean chit to Congressman Jagdish Tytler accused of spearheading the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, and Congress party's decision to field Tytler from Delhi's Northeast parliamentary seat.

Having registered his protest, he sat down calmly and seemed ready to take down further notes when two security men rushed in and frog-marched him out. As he was being taken out by the security personnel, Jarnail Singh said, "Whatever I did, the method was wrong. But I did for a right cause". Chidambaram regained his composure almost immediately. He urged the securitymen to be gentle with the offending scribe (it is election time), and went on with his press briefing. Jarnail Singh is known to be deeply religious but not dogmatic. Almost instantly he was a hero among sections of the Sikh community. The Shiromani Akali Dal lost no time in announcing a cash reward of Rs 2 lakh to him for courage to display the Sikhs' pain and suffering. Akalis then went a step further to offer him a party ticket in the current election. Jarnail Singh, however, seemed contrite within an hour of his, what seemed a calculated act. He was released by the police after brief detention. Singh said that he has no plans to jump into the arena of politics nor is he hankering for cash rewards, etc.

Jarnail Singh's Reebok shoe did hit home just after two days when the two senior congress leaders- Jagdish Tytler and Sajjan Kumar were asked to step down as the Congress party didn't want to lose Sikh votes, particularly in Punjab- the only Sikh majority state in India. Both Tytler and Kumar were indicted by the Nanawati Commission that inves-

tigated the 1984 Sikh riots. Jagdish Tytler in his four Lok Sabha victories in Delhi has always defeated top ranking BJP stalwarts. He has served as a Union minister in the Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh's government. It now appears that his political career is almost over. Once a roadside tea seller, Sajjan Kumar was elected for the first time in 1980 from the rural outer Delhi seat. He repeated the act in 1991 and in 2004, both the times defeating BJP heavyweight Sahib Singh Verma. This time he was nominated for Delhi's South parliamentary seat. For more than two decades Sajjan Kumar successfully outfoxed the ghosts from his past but this time he was unable to repeat the act. Emboldened by the instant celebrity-hood of Jarnail Singh, just within three days a retired principal of a Government school



found courage to fling his footwear at Congress candidate Navin Jindal in Kurukshetra while he was in the middle of a speech to protest Congress's policies. This shoe-thrower has been arrested and a case registered against him. Within another six days, on April 16, a former district president of BJP's youthwing created a sensation by throwing a wooden slipper (khadaun) at Prime-ministerial aspirant L.K. Advani when he was about to settle in his chair on the dais at a public meeting in Madhya Pradesh. The disgruntled BJP member was immediately arrested and charged under appropriate sections of the IPC. He told media-persons that Advani was nukli Lauh Purush (fake iron man) and so not a fit candidate to be a Prime-ministerial choice. The slipper missed Advani by about 4 feet, but he became the latest victim of a series of 'shoe-throwing' maverick acts in the country.

where governments manifestly failed in their responsibility to protect their citizens. We urge the United Nations and the international community to exercise its responsibility to react to the dire catastrophic situation and apply appropriate political, diplomatic, legal and humanitarian measures to stop the carnage and human suffering in the 'No-Fire Zone'. We respectfully urge the United Nations to invoke its power under Article 24 of the UN Charter and take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, to protect the Tamil civilian population from genocide and prevent a bloodbath.

R2P & Tamils

Full text of the letter sent to UN, Common Wealth & Head of States (Canada, England & Australia) by the International Coalition of Tamil Lawyers on April 23, 2009.

April 23, 2009

His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon

UN Secretary-General
UN Headquarters
First Avenue at 46th Street
New York NY 10017

Your Excellency:

THE SPECTRE OF A BLOOD-BATH IN SRI LANKA

We represent a cross section of the lawyers practicing law in different countries. We are ethnic Tamils hailing from the Tamil habitat in Sri Lanka where members of our Tamil fraternity are being mowed down and massacred, day to day - even at this very moment - by the Sri Lankan armed forces in the ostensible

"No-Fire Zone". Our parents, brothers, sisters and children continue to perish in their thousands pathetically at the hands of the Sri Lankan forces, despite isolated appeals from certain members of the international community to stop the war. Contemptuously rejecting the appeals and denying the massacre by its military forces, the Sri Lankan government continues its war campaign with greater intensity and ferocity.

On behalf of the innocent Tamil civilians, we earnestly appeal to the U.N., as the last abode of refuge for these defenseless people, to act urgently and stop the military offensive by the Sri Lankan Armed Forces and prevent the killing and maiming of the multitude of civilians in the so-called No-Fire Zone (NFZ) in the North of Sri Lanka.

Despite the government's attempt to falsify the figures, based on information from independent sources, there are approximately 200,000 civilians still trapped in the so-called "No-

fire Zone" and are now at grave risk of mass killings. Even sanitized reports seeping through Sri Lankan official sources and personal testimonies of the kith and kin of the victims reveal that the Armed forces have entered the 'No-Fire Zone' indiscriminately killing and maiming hundreds of civilians. Even medical staff in shoddy make-shift hospitals have been killed. Due to the intensified artillery attacks and gunfire from all sides, the dead and the wounded are left along the roadside to rot or bleed to death. According to reports, all indications are that the government forces have launched their final assault and the spectre of a bloodbath is looming large.

In view of the grave circumstances, doing nothing is not an option. It is incumbent on every member state to discharge its responsibility to ensure the protection of the civilians who are exposed to imminent harm. We strongly believe that the United Nation and the International Community will honour the World Summit Outcome Document Endorsement of R2P endorsed by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit pledging to act in cases

where governments manifestly failed in their responsibility to protect their citizens.

We respectfully urge the United Nations to invoke its power under Article 24 of the UN Charter and take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, to protect the Tamil civilian population from genocide and prevent a bloodbath.

Yours respectfully,
DILANI GUNARAJAH
Barrister & Solicitor (Canada)
Representing the Members of the Legal Profession, named below:

Daya Arumugam (Solicitor)
London, United Kingdom
Vasuki Muruhathas (Solicitor)
London, United Kingdom
C. Sriskandarajah (Solicitor)
London, United Kingdom
J.A. Rajakariar (Solicitor)

London, United Kingdom
P. Suresh (Solicitor) London, United Kingdom
Raphael Maharajah (Barrister & Solicitor) Ontario, Canada
Saravana Navaratnam (Barrister & Solicitor) Ontario, Canada
Ponnambalam Kayilasanathan (Barrister & Solicitor) Ontario, Canada
Thangavel M. Kesavan (Barrister & Solicitor) Ontario, Canada
c.c.
- H.E. Mr. Miguel d' Escoto Brockmann, President of UN General Assembly
- Members of the Security Council
- Ambassadors, Permanent Missions to UN
- The Director-General of UNOG & UNOV
- The Honourable High Commissioner for Human Rights
- The Honourable High Commissioner for Refugees
- Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs & Emergency Relief
- Under-Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict
- Common Wealth Secretariat

JOINT STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT OBAMA AND PRIME MINISTER HARPER UNITED STATES-CANADA SUPPORT FOR CHRYSLER LLC

The Governments of the United States and Canada, have reviewed and approved the restructuring plans of Chrysler LLC and its subsidiaries, including Chrysler Canada Inc.

As a result, thanks to the considerable contributions and sacrifices of company management, the United Auto Workers and Canadian Auto Workers, and major lenders, and a successful partnership agreement with Fiat SpA, our Governments are in a position to extend support to help Chrysler restructure itself and re-emerge as a globally competitive automaker.

"We appreciate the close and cooperative relationship between the U.S. and Canadian governments during this period of restructuring in the auto industry. Together, we have put in place a financing package that will give Chrysler a chance to achieve financial viability," said President Obama.

"I want to thank President Obama and the U.S Automotive Task Force for their close cooperation with Canada on this challenging issue. Thanks to our joint efforts, there is now a road ahead to a stronger Chrysler and a stronger industry in the future on



both sides of the border," said Prime Minister Harper.

The Governments will provide \$ US 10.5 billion in financing, including short term and medium term capital and debtor-in-possession financing to assist with the court-supervised restructuring of Chrysler LLC. Of this amount, the United States is contributing \$US 8.08 billion and Canadian governments (including the Government of Canada and Government of Ontario) \$US 2.42 billion.

The United States will have 8 percent of the equity of the restructured Chrysler LLC, and Canada and Ontario will have 2 percent, and the United States

will appoint four independent directors to the new Chrysler LLC board, while Canada will appoint one independent director.

The close cooperation of our Governments acknowledges that the automotive industries in Canada and the United States are tightly linked, with major automobile manufacturers and suppliers operating on both sides of the border in a completely integrated way. The cost sharing reflects the historic shares of auto production in both countries for Chrysler, which will be maintained under



this restructuring agreement. The United States and Canada are committed to continuing to work together closely as we chart the path to a stronger automobile industry in both countries, both in the short term as we complete similar efforts on General Motors restructuring plan, and in the long term as we seek to ensure a competitive, environmentally responsible automobile industry for the future.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

Courtesy: Patricia Trott, Strategic Communications, 416-392-8937, ptrott@toronto.ca



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We are writing to express our grave concerns about the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in the "safe zone" in the Vanni region of Sri Lanka. Most independent observers estimate that more than 200,000 Tamil civilians, many already displaced multiple times, have been under siege in the tiny coastal strip with at least 50,000 still there. Confirmed reports indicate that more than 6,400 civilians, including 700 children, have been killed since January 2009.

Displaced persons who have managed to flee the fighting have been placed in de facto detention camps by the Sri Lankan government where they are denied freedom of movement, in contravention of international standards. There are over 40,000 displaced people being held in 13 sites in the Vavuniya District in overcrowded conditions without adequate access to healthcare, food and water. There are reports of rape, torture and killings in the camps (Medico International, Germany, April 16, 2009). Civilians who are suspected of LTTE ties have been taken into government custody, leading to fears of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, tactics the government and its allied militias have employed in significant numbers over the past few years (Amnesty International, ASA 37/004/2009).

Recent artillery attacks by Sri Lankan forces have indiscriminately targeted civilians and civilian objects, in contravention of international humanitarian law. There are credible reports that the Sri Lankan army may be using illegal cluster bombs as well as thermobaric bombs in the safe zone with high civilian casualties. There have been more than two dozen incidents of artillery shelling or aerial bombardment on or near hospitals, in flagrant violation of the Geneva Conventions. The presence of wounded combatants in hospitals does not turn them into legitimate targets. Deliberately attacking a hospital is a war crime. At the same time we deplore the LTTE's forcible recruitment of civilians, including children, for untrained military duty and for labour in the combat zones as well as its practice of forcing civilians to retreat with its forces, deliberately preventing civilians under its effective control from fleeing to safety. Nevertheless, violations of the laws of war by one side to a conflict do not justify violations by the opposing side. They do not permit the indiscriminate use of force by the Sri Lankan forces in response (Human Rights Watch, 20 February 2009).

The overall human rights situation in Sri Lanka has deteriorat-

Canada uniquely positioned to reactivate and support constructive forms of engagement in Sri Lanka

Statement on Sri Lanka by International and Canadian Academics

ed dramatically since the current government assumed power in 2006. The Sri Lankan government has utilized the "war on Terror" as a cover to systematically destroy all democratic processes and institutions. Sri Lanka was ranked 165th out of 173 countries in the 'Reporters Without Borders' 2008 press freedom index, the lowest ranking of any democratic country. Political opponents and journalists with critical views are subject to threats, intimidation and assassination. The culture of impunity has been institutionalized. In an effort to shield its own actions from public scrutiny, the Sri Lankan government has barred most humanitarian agencies, independent observers and journalists from the conflict zones. As a result there is a lack of timely information about the situation of the trapped civilians as well as severe shortfalls in humanitarian assistance.

The government of Sri Lanka continues to justify its actions as necessary to achieve an imminent victory over "Tamil terrorism." However, as long as the human rights of the Tamil minority are subject to systematic violation, the conflict will persist and the LTTE will garner support from Tamils in both Sri Lanka and the diaspora, despite its proscription by various Western countries, including Canada.

There is a critical need for international solidarity in the face of this immediate catastrophe. We believe that the government of Canada has a special responsibility to act to bring about an end to violations of international law and to make a significant contribution to a political resolution of this conflict. As host to the largest Tamil diaspora outside of Sri Lanka, Canada should assume a proactive role in promoting and supporting efforts aimed at resolving the legitimate grievances of the Tamil people including recognition of their right to self-determination. The worldwide Tamil diaspora is strongly represented and plays an important role in the life of many of our cities; their concerns should be our concerns too.

The previous government supported an advisory role for the Canadian Forum of Federations in Sri Lanka while the current government appointed a representative to the International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP) with a mandate to observe investigations into human rights abuses (the IIGEP withdrew from Sri Lanka in March 2008 in the face of Sri Lanka's failure to meet even the basic

minimum standards in probing rights abuses). Canada is uniquely positioned to reactivate and support such constructive forms of engagement.

We therefore call on the Government of Canada to:

o Work with both parties to the conflict to implement an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire.

o Urge the International community and the UN to take responsibility for the protection of Tamil civilians.

o Urge the UN Security Council to authorize timely and decisive measures to halt mass atrocities in the Vanni region of Sri Lanka, including the dispatch of a special envoy to the region, and the creation of a commission of inquiry into crimes under international law committed by any person or entity.

o Demand that the government of Sri Lanka remove restrictions imposed on access to the conflict zone for humanitarian workers and media and permit international observers in the detention camps.

o Demand that the LTTE allow civilians to continue to leave the conflict area.

o Initiate internationally mediated efforts aimed at achieving a durable political solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka.

Signed by:

Nuzhat Abbas, Toronto
Maita Abola Sayo, York University
Lyn Adamson
Greg Albo, Professor, York University
Tariq Amin-Khan, Assistant Professor, Ryerson University
Benjamin Baader, Assistant Professor, University of Manitoba
Zaheer Baber, Professor, University of Toronto
Reem Bahdi, Professor, University of Windsor
Tanya Basok, University of Windsor
Andrew Biro, Assistant Professor, Acadia University
Malcolm Blincow, Associate Professor, York University
Raoul Boulakia, Lawyer, Toronto
Mark Bradley, UQAM
Mike Burke, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
Laura Cameron, Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair, Queen's University
R. Cheran, Assistant Professor, University of Windsor
Tanya Chung Tiam Fook, York University
Francis Cody, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto
Janet Conway, Associate Professor, Brock University
Kendra Coulter, University of

Windsor
Carol Lynne D'Arcangelis, Instructor, Ryerson University
Radhika Desai, Professor, University of Manitoba
Susan Drummond, Professor, York University
Robin E. Feenstra, McGill University
Christoph Emmrich, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto
Bryan Evans, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
Pascale Fournier, Assistant Professor, University of Ottawa
Evan Fox-Decent, Assistant Professor, McGill University
Victoria Freeman, University of Toronto
Doreen Fumia, Assistant Professor, Ryerson University
Grace-Edward Galabuzi, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
Glynis George, Associate Professor, University of Windsor
Wenona Giles, Professor, York University
Sam Gindin, York University
Harry Glasbeek, Professor Emeritus and Senior Scholar, Osgoode Hall Law School
Avvy Go, Director, Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic
Ellen Goldberg, Professor, Queen's University
Rebecca Granovsky-Larsen, Ryerson University
Ricardo Grinspun, Associate Professor, York University
Gayle Gross, The NIA Group, LLC
Victoria Gross, The NIA Group, LLC
Tanya Gulliver, York University
Shubhra Gururani, Associate Professor, York University
Denise Hammond, CUPE
Sharryn J. Aiken, Assistant Professor, Queen's University
Barbara Jackman, Jackman & Associates, Barristers and Solicitors
Kajri Jain, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto
Amina Jamal, Assistant Professor, Ryerson University
Donna Jeffery, Associate Professor, University of Victoria
Ilan Kapoor, Associate Professor, York University
RM Kennedy, Centennial College
Samantha King, Assistant Professor, Queen's University
Gary Kinsman, Professor, Laurentian University
Mustafa Koc, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
Joy Kogawa
Jane Ku, Assistant Professor, University of Windsor
Anton Kuerti
Lee Lakeman, Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter

Jack Layton, Leader, New Democratic Party of Canada
Genevieve LeBaron, Professor, York University
Jean Lee
N. Gitanjali Lena, Lawyer
Eleanor MacDonald, Associate Professor, Queen's University
Audrey Macklin, Professor, University of Toronto
Ali Mallah, Canadian Peace Alliance/Canadian Arab Federation
Elizabeth May, Leader, Green Party of Canada
Susan McGrath, Associate Professor, York University
Pat McKendry
Susan McNaughton, York University
Adele Mercier, Professor, Queen's University
Nchamah Miller, Network of Latin American Investigators for Democracy and Peace
Srimoyee Mitra, SAVAC
Kevin Moloney, York University
Colin Mooers, Professor, Ryerson University
Khaled Mouammar, National President, Canadian Arab Federation
Katharine N. Rankin, Associate Professor, University of Toronto
Mary-Jo Nadeau, Trent University
Mera Nirmalan-Nathan, Ontario Public Interest Research Group
Peter Nyers, Associate Professor, McMaster University
Obiora Okafor, Professor, York University
Leo Panitch, Distinguished Research Professor, Canada Research Chair, York University
Stephen Pender, Associate Professor, University of Windsor
Steve Pitt
Srilata Raman, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto
Narda Razack, Associate Professor, York University
Judy Rebeck, Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy, Ryerson University
Darryl Robinson, Assistant Professor, Queen's University
Stephanie Ross, Assistant Professor, York University
Carole Roy, St. Francis Xavier University
Andre Schmid, Associate Professor, University of Toronto
Craig Scott, Professor of Law, Director, Nathanson Centre on Transnational Human Rights, Crime and Security, Osgoode Hall Law School
Alan Sears, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
Mitu Sengupta, Assistant Professor, Ryerson University

Continued Next Page...

Continued from March Issue

(By Ursula Stanislaus B.A. (Cey); LL.B. (Cey); Attorney-at-law (Cey))

Diploma in Corporate Law (Canada)

LEGAL ENTITIES



A Limited Partnership must have at least one general partner, who will be subject to unlimited liability for the debts of the partnership. Limited partners are liable only to the extent of their capital contribution, provided they do not participate in the management of the business. The law prohibits a limited partner from participating in the management of the partnership. The Limited Partnerships Act, R.S.O. 1990, provides that a limited partnership is dissolved if a general partner dies, retires, or becomes mentally incompetent.

'Limited Liability Partnerships' also known as "LLP" are distinct from Limited Partnership, in which all partners will have limited liability. Currently in several provinces in Canada, as well as certain States in the United States of America provide for professionals such as lawyers, accountants, doctors and engineers to form Limited Liability Partnership under their respective governing laws, in which the partners who were not directly involved in certain acts of other partners are not liable.

Form 6 under the Business Names Act should be completed for the registration of Limited Liability Partnership or Extra-provincial Limited Liability Partnership or Extra-provincial Limited Liability Company.

'Limited Liability Company' also known as "LLC" is a new form of unincorporated association introduced in the United States of America. It provides the benefit of separate entity with limited liability with tax treatment as of a Partnership. There are no statute to establish a Limited Liability Company in Ontario, but an LLC

formed in another jurisdiction may be registered in Ontario as an Extra-Provincial Limited Liability Company. The Canada Revenue Agency will consider an LLC to be a corporation for taxation purposes under the Income Tax Act (Canada).

A 'Joint-Venture' is a contractual relationship as a partnership, which is therefore flexible and can be structured to meet different needs, but it does not confer on the partners many of the advantages of incorporation. Joint-Ventures are governed entirely by contract, as there is no specific statutory definition or regulatory scheme for joint ventures, at either the provincial or federal level.

A Joint Venture is an association of two or more businesses intend to enter into a limited scope of enterprise (mostly for a single purpose) for the purpose of mutual profit of the parties by pooling their resources and expertise. Business expansion, development of new products or moving into new markets, particularly overseas, are some of the reasons to form a joint-venture.

A Joint Venture agreement

may be a profit sharing agreement based on a licence wherein the licensor wants to utilize low-cost production in a marketplace, but does not wish to set up a production facility directly; or a corporate joint venture agreement wherein one party provides the technology and cash, and the other party provides the land and cash to build the manufacturing facility; or a consortium agreement which permits two companies to join forces to bid and complete a single project.

Registrations or filings are not required in order to carry on business in a joint venture. The Joint Venture can take the form of a partnership (often referred to as a contractual joint venture) or as a corporation (often referred to as an equity joint venture) depending on the laws of the country in which it is located.

'Franchising' is fundamentally a form of business investment and ownership governing the distribution and sale of goods or services. It involves the franchisor who for a fee or fees licences to one or more franchisees, a complete business structure or format, which may

include the business name, trademarks, appearance, trade secrets, patents, copyright, design, procedures, techniques, business manuals, accounting systems, employee uniforms, etc. The franchisee agrees to implement and follow this structure, consistently and without deviation. The franchisor and franchisees enter into a 'franchise agreement', in which the relationship and agreement between them is described in detail. A franchise agreement is a contract which is entered into between the franchisor and the franchisee and any guarantors, or others, if applicable. The franchisor may or may not be carrying on its own business using the business structure. The franchisee operates a business using the business structure or format of the franchisor, and pays to the franchisor one or more fees for the right to use the business structure or format. The Canadian Franchise Association adopted the mandatory disclosure policy since 1996 in order to protect franchisees from malpractice.

According to the International Franchise Association a new franchise opens in North America every 8 to 16 minutes. Franchise businesses are estimated to account for almost \$90 billion in Canadian sales. There are about 500 franchisors and 40,000 franchisees in the Province of Ontario. Many franchise outlets employ 10 to 15 people. Franchise employees make up a significant proportion of Ontario's work force.

A 'Licence' is an arrangement in which the Licensor gives to the Licensee the right to use certain intellectual properties owned by the Licensor or do certain things. Trade Mark, Patent and Copyright are the most common forms of 'intellectual properties'. A Trade



Mark is typically one or more words, or numbers, or a design or any combination of these, which one business uses to distinguish its goods and services from the goods or services of another business. A Patent relates to inventions, which gives the owner of the patent, the exclusive right to make, use and sell the invention claimed in the patent, in Canada, for the duration of the patent. A Copyright protects the original literary, artistic, musical and dramatic works, by giving the owner of a copyright various rights, including the exclusive right to reproduce the work, in whole, or in a substantial part, in any material form whatsoever. A list of works which are protected by copyright in Canada, includes, books, newspapers, dictionaries, magazines, computer software, paintings, drawings, sculptures, architectural works, engravings, dramatic works, photographs, films, videos, maps and musical works. If either party is to provide intellectual property to be used in the production of the products, an agreement should set out the terms and conditions of that use. It is more common to do so in a 'licence agreement' or a technology transfer agreement. In drafting this licence or technology transfer agreement, the Licensor should treat the joint venture as if it were an unrelated third party, taking care that the property rights are not unintentionally granted to the joint venture, and that upon breach of any of the terms of the agreement, the Licensor has preserved its remedies in full. Trade Marks should be guarded carefully and be made the subject of a separate agreement. **(End...)**

Contd. from previous Page...

- Tyler Shipley, York University
- Sadeqa Siddiqui, Centre Communautaire des Femmes Sud-Asiatique, Montreal
- Preethy Sivakumar, York University
- Haema Sivanesan, SAVAC
- Jamie Smith, York University
- Susanne Soederberg, Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair in Global Political Economy, Queen's University
- Aparna Sundar, Assistant Professor, Ryerson University
- Donald Swartz, Associate Professor, Carleton University
- Cheryl Teelucksingh, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
- Vimalasan Thasan, York University
- Nishant Upadhyay, York University
- Ravi Vaitheespara, Associate Professor, University of Manitoba
- Chris Vance, York University
- Heather Vidito, CUPE
- Karen Walker, York University
- Rosemary Warskett, Associate Professor, Carleton University

- Mel Watkins, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto
- Melissa Autumn White, York University
- Cynthia Wright, York University
- Jesse Zimmerman, York University
- Endorsed By:
- Elizabeth Allen, Massey University, New Zealand
- Gnana K. Bharathy, Assistant Professor, Old Dominion University, USA
- Anne M. Blackburn, Cornell University, USA
- Piya Chatterjee, Associate Professor, University of California Riverside, USA
- Lawrence Cohen, Professor, University of California Berkeley, USA
- E. Valentine Daniel, Professor, Columbia University
- Oivind Fuglerud, Professor, University of Oslo, Norway
- Anita Hillestad, Norway
- Paul Knight, Massey University, New Zealand
- Ram Mahalingam, Associate

- Professor, University of Michigan, USA
- Dennis McGilvray, Associate Professor, University of Colorado at Boulder, USA
- Mr. J.B.P. More, Institute for Research in Social Sciences and Humanities
- Kathleen Morley, Professor, University of Oslo, Norway
- Madhusree Mukerjee Tove Nicolaisen, Professor, University of Oslo, Norway
- Lalsangkima Pachuau, Associate Professor, Asbury Theological Seminary, USA
- Peter Schalk, Professor, Uppsala University, USA
- Janikke Solstad Vedeler, Norwegian Social Research
- Jonas M.N. Sørensen, Norway
- Margaret Trawick, Professor, Massey University, New Zealand
- Padma Venkataraman, MAN-GAI - Theatreperson
- Sita Venkateswar, Massey University, New Zealand
- Mark Whitaker, Professor, University of South Carolina, USA

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Government of Canada recognizes efforts of Toronto youth to combat racism

Five students from Toronto were recently honoured for their efforts to combat racism by the Government of Canada. The students from a Toronto Public school created the winning video in Ontario in the "Racism. Stop It!" National Video Competition.

This contest encourages young people, aged 12 to 20, from across Canada to produce a short video to express their points of view on eliminating racism. More than 1,200 students participated in this year's competition.

An independent national panel selected ten winning videos based on their originality, audio-visual quality, and the effectiveness of their anti-racism messages. The eleventh winning entry was recognized with a Public Choice Award, selected through voting on YouTube. These winning entries were then edited into 30-second public service announcements. CBC Radio and Radio Canada started airing these announcements on March 21, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Given below is a comment from one of the winning student, when Monsoon Journal team visited Sir Alexander Mackenzie Senior Public School and met the winners and the Teacher. The whole class divided into 2 groups of 17 entered in the competition



Photos of winning students from Sir Alexander Mackenzie Senior Public School
Photo Courtesy: Rudy of A1 Digital

and one of the group won and elected 5 students to represent in the finals. The teacher gave lots of encouragement for the students to enter into the competition and students also took advantage and in the end grab the award.

Comment from one of the winning student:

To whom it may concern:

Hi, My name is Rachel Zhang and I'm from Sir Alexander Mackenzie Senior Public School. I'm writing this letter for a follow up for winning the Racism, Stop It! National Competition. Thank you so much for coming to our school today. We really appreciate it. Since our video is about stop stereotyping, I would like to say a



few words about it. I think stereotyping is a form of racism too. It not only eliminates individuality, it also makes people think that they have to belong to a certain group. For example, if all your cousins are good at soccer, you have to be good at it too. Media, a big influence on children are starting to have more and more stereotypes.



mean by negative stereotype is like which race/gender/religion and etc are bad in however ways. What I mean by positive stereotype is like which race/gender/religion and etc have to be that good. A typical example of positive stereotype is, Asians are good at Math. But it's so not true, because I have so many Asian friends that are bad at it too. They always say that they are ashamed of themselves because everyone thinks that Asians HAVE to be good at it.

Stereotype changes our thoughts, it doesn't make us different from anyone else. But at this age, what we really need is individuality. Sadly, almost no one realizes this very important issue.

Thank you for taking your time to read my letter.

Sincerely,
Rachel Zhang

For example, Family Guy, American Dad and South Parks. Media use stereotype all the time to entertain people. But they don't know what it's doing to us. It makes us think that we have to live up to that expectation they want us to be. Not only negative stereotypes are bad, positive stereotypes are bad too. What I



Raymond Cho, Toronto City Councillor's letter to The Prime Minister

April 22 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper,
Prime Minister of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Re: Stop the Genocide in Sri Lanka

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

My name is Raymond Cho, Toronto City Councillor representing Scarborough Rouge River, Ward 42.

I am beginning this humble letter by saying "thank you, Canada". 42 years ago I immigrated from South Korea to Canada, the best country in the world. As most people know, during the Korean War from 1950 - 1953, Canada sent thousands of Canadian soldiers to Korea to save South Koreans and their democracy from the communist North Korean military attack. During this Korean war 516 Canadian soldiers lost their lives. Without their sacrifice and Canadian support together with other UN participation, I would not be able to write this urgent letter to you as a Canadian politician.

In my ward, there are thousands of Tamil Canadians whose relatives have been and are being killed everyday in mass numbers in Sri Lanka. I have been getting lots of e-mails, phone calls and some Tamil people from my ward came to my office begging me to write this urgent letter to your office urging the Canadian government to help bring truce between Sri Lankan Government forces and Tamil people.

1. The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) has unilaterally abrogated the Norwegian mediated ceasefire agreement (CFA) and has intensified the war against the national Tamil majority under the charade of fighting against terrorism. According to the report by Puleedevan, Secretary General of the Tiger's peace secretariat, Sri Lankan Military killed 1,000 people and wounded 2,000 last Monday through shelling. Even the International Committee of the Red Cross warned the situation was "nothing short of Catastrophic" and urged both sides to prevent further mass casualties among civilians.
2. Senior U.S. diplomat Michael Owen, urged Sri Lanka to allow the International community to monitor what was happening and assure help for trapped civilians.
3. Prime Minister Gordon Brown of Britain has been trying very hard to send a special envoy to Sri Lanka to investigate gross human rights violation.

As we all know, there is nothing more important than saving human lives. While I am writing this letter to you, hundreds of people are either killed or wounded in Sri Lanka. Canada has been well respected throughout the world because we, Canadians care about people's right, world peace and justice.

Honourable Prime Minister please do something immediately and show your leadership to save tens of thousands' lives in Sri Lanka. Not only desperate Tamils but also all the peace loving, caring citizens throughout the world will remember your outstanding leadership and good deeds in this very difficult time.

Thanking you in advance, I remain,

Sincerely Yours,

Raymond Cho

Raymond Cho
Toronto City Councillor
Ward 42 - Scarborough-Rouge River

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LAYTON CONVEYS CALL FOR IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE IN SRI LANKA

New Democrat leader Jack Layton took the opportunity at a meeting with the Sri Lankan High Commissioner to Canada to convey New Democrats' call for an immediate ceasefire in Sri Lanka.

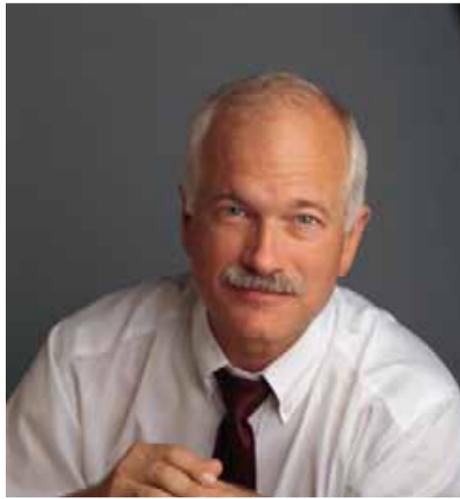
"I call on the government of Sri Lanka to accept an immediate ceasefire," said Layton as he expressed his condolences to all those on both sides of the conflict who had lost loved ones.

"Furthermore, I asked that aid agencies and international media be given unfettered access to the conflict zone."

Layton expressed his concern regarding the camps erected by the Government of Sri Lanka and relayed the fears of Canadian Tamil families about the safety of their relatives at these camps.

"I expressed my strong rejection of the practice of internment at these camps and asked that at the very least the government of Sri Lanka open the means of communications between Canadian Tamil families and their relatives at these camps," said Layton.

The meeting had been requested by the Sri Lankan representative. Layton rejected the Sri Lankan government's assertion that a ceasefire was impossible. He reiterated the New Democrats' position that sustainable peace in the region can only be guar-



anteed through a peace process, starting with an immediate ceasefire to all hostilities. Layton expressed hope that meetings between high-level UN officials and Sri Lankan government may lead to a ceasefire agreement.

"New Democrats have once again articulated its strong position for an end to the conflict, this time directly to the government of Sri Lanka," stated Layton.

Layton spoke of the anguish in the eyes of those many Tamils with whom he had met here in Canada because they cannot communicate with their loved ones back home.

The Joy of Enlightenment and Renunciation

Contd. from Page 13

The theme of compassion pervades the entire length and breadth of the Buddha's teachings. He stressed the importance of limitless loving kindness for everyone without any kind of discrimination. It is easy to remain meek and mild so long as nothing unpleasant happens. But confronted by unpleasantness, hostility and violence, goodness and composure are tested. Therefore the Buddha continually exhorted his followers to maintain goodwill and love in their hearts, regardless of how badly they are treated by others. Returning enmity for enmity is a conduct absolutely alien to the Buddha's philosophy of courtesy and compassion for all, even under the most trying conditions.

It is hardly the Buddha's fault that his 'followers' in Buddhist countries do not heed his words. Even in Sri Lanka the soi-disant 'leading Buddhist country in the world' where the teachings are supposedly preserved in their 'pristine purity', it is appalling that social relations are characterised by anything but harmony and goodwill. Those belonging to other religions are downtrodden and the internecine tribal conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamils has resulted in much bloodshed.

When an entire nation is going up in flames, all in the name of race, language and religion, Buddha's enlightened words seems like a call in the wilderness. What better message can there be in these troubled times when the teachings of the Blessed Master can make the world a better place? And what better target can there be than children who are now growing up on a diet of violence and sensual pleasures?

In 1935 Japan invaded Manchuria. The Japanese poet, Noguchi, with whom Rabindranath Tagore had been very friendly,



appealed to him to support the Japanese, and to persuade the Chinese that the 'New Order' was for their own good. Rabindranath wrote a stinging reply and denounced Japanese aggression. He wrote: "You are raising your New Order on a tower of skulls. I do believe in the message of the Light of Asia; but I never dreamt that this message could be identified with deeds that would have brought exaltation to the heart of Tamerlane." (Tamerlane: Mongolian conqueror (1336-1405) who led his nomadic hordes from their capital at Samarqand in central Asia to overrun vast areas of Persia, Turkey, Russia, and India.) He went on to write a poem on the subject, giving vent to his holy wrath:

The war drums are sounded

Men force their features into frightfulness, and gnash their teeth;

And before they rush out to gather raw human flesh for death's larder

They march to the temple of Buddha, the Compassionate,

To claim his blessings, while loud beats the drum rat-a-tat,

And the earth trembles.

The eighth of May (2009) is the full moon day of the lunar month Vaishaaka. This day commemorates three important events of Buddha's life - his birth, enlightenment and ultimate liberation. This thrice blessed and sacred day is celebrated as Buddha Purnima, Vesak or Buddha Jayanti. Let us all pay homage to the Enlightened One and meditate for world peace.

"It is sublime in the beginning, it is sublime in the middle, it is sublime at the end," - Buddha to Ananda on the essence of his teaching.

(e-mail the writer at: skandos@hotmail.com)

Congratulations to our student volunteers!

Each year the Scarborough Optimist Club hosts an evening to acknowledge students volunteering in the health-care facilities in Scarborough.

Congratulations to The Scarborough Hospital volunteers Camellia Srikanthan, Irene Wong and Thadchana Ariya-rajah.



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This section is intended to help new homeowners understand what's included in the Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act (the Act) and what to do if a warranty problem arises.

The Act outlines the warranty coverage that builders are required to provide to their customers.

Coverage under the Act includes deposit protection, protection against defects in work and materials, protection against unauthorized substitutions, and protection against delayed closings or delayed occupancies without proper notice. For condominiums, warranty coverage also includes common/shared areas of the building.

The aggregate maximum warranty coverage for new homes and condominium units is \$300,000*. The maximum coverage for condominium common elements is \$50,000 times the number of units, to a maximum of \$2.5 million.

Most issues related to the Statutory Warranty are resolved between builders and owners without the intervention of Tarion. When necessary, Tarion will help

New Homes-The Statutory Warranty - What's Included



homeowners and builders interpret the limits of the Act, and will intercede to protect consumers when builders fail to honour warranty obligations.

* Tarion increased the aggregate maximum warranty coverage provided under the One Year, Two Year and Major Structural Defect warranties to \$300,000 for homes with a date of possession on or after July 1, 2006. This increased coverage amount applies regardless of when the purchase agreements or construction contracts in issue were entered into. If the date of possession of a home is

prior to July 1, 2006, the warranty coverage under the One Year, Two Year and Major Structural Defect warranties will continue to be as follows:

- \$100,000 if the purchase agreement or construction contract for the home was entered into before September 1, 2004; and
- \$150,000 if the purchase agreement or construction contract for the home was entered into on or after September 1, 2004.

Source: Tarion

April sales news on Greater Toronto REALTORS

In April 2009, Greater Toronto REALTORS® reported 8,107 sales - down seven per cent from April 2008. While April sales remained lower than last year, the resale housing market gained momentum on a month-over-month basis. The seasonally adjusted annual rate of sales in April, at 80,900, was up 26 per cent from March and up two-thirds compared to January's ten-year low.

"Conditions in the resale housing market have improved markedly this spring," according to TREB President Maureen O'Neill. "Home purchases have increased as households have taken advantage of low interest rates and slightly lower home prices."

The average price for April transactions was \$385,641 - down three per cent from last year.

"The rate of average price decline continued to diminish last month. This is due in large part to a tightening in the resale market," stated Jason Mercer, TREB's Senior Manager of Market Analysis. "The level of sales relative to new listings increased in April."

Greater Toronto REALTORS® are passionate about their work. They adhere to a strict Code of Ethics and share a state-of-the-art Multiple Listing Service. Serving over 28,000 Members in the Greater Toronto Area, the Toronto Real Estate Board is Canada's largest real estate board.

Greater Toronto Area open house listings are now available on www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com.

Source: Toronto Real Estate Board

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New issue of Our Toronto outlines how your City can help

The second edition of the City of Toronto's official city-wide newsletter, Our Toronto, will be issued shortly. This edition of Our Toronto informs residents and businesses about how the City can assist them through the economic recession.

*This edition of Our Toronto is

particularly important for Torontonians,* said Mayor David Miller. *Information about how to access City services is especially important during a recession and this newsletter ensures everyone is aware of the City's many programs and services - including recently enhanced programs.*

There are many other articles in the second edition, including information about the recently passed 2009 Budget, Building Permits, TTC *next vehicle* initiative, Toronto's 175th Anniversary, Recycling and Green Bin programs, apartment inspections, water meters, lead water pipe replacement programs, access to free dental care, community investment grants, Streets to Homes programs, fire and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms and more. This issue of Our Toronto also contains a number of features about new and enhanced economic and environmental investments the City is making.

This edition also includes a

special four page pull-out in the centre spread that provides the essential information home-owners and renters should know to prepare for an emergency including information about emergency kits and the importance of home-owner and renter insurance. The articles provide critical planning tips which can help Torontonians prepare for severe weather, power outages, fire or other urgent

situations. The City wishes to acknowledge the support of Insurance Bureau of Canada and Toronto Hydro in making the special pull-out section possible.

Information about how to enter the City's 175th anniversary



sary song and photography contests is also provided in this edition. Our Toronto replaces three former city-wide publications. It is printed and distributed to every household in the city through Canada Post, and will be available on the City's website later next week in English and

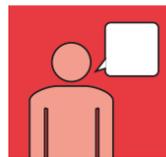
French as well as the top 10 languages spoken in Toronto. Those languages are Chinese, Tamil, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Urdu, Russian, Farsi and Korean. Our Toronto will also be available in English in HTML, PDF and audio format, and Braille and large print is available upon request.



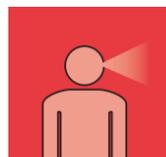
STROKE WARNING SIGNS



WEAKNESS Sudden loss of strength or sudden numbness in the face, arm or leg, even if temporary.



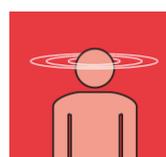
TROUBLE SPEAKING Sudden difficulty speaking or understanding or sudden confusion, even if temporary.



VISION PROBLEMS Sudden trouble with vision, even if temporary.



HEADACHE Sudden severe and unusual headache.



DIZZINESS Sudden loss of balance, especially with any of the above signs.

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms, **CALL 9-1-1** or your local emergency number immediately.

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EAGLE GLEN

A FAMILY COMMUNITY BY JOHN BODDY HOMES

John Boddy Homes has won the Diamond Award for 'Best Builder' for the twelfth year in a row in this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has now opened its newest phase in their Eagle Glen community in Ajax. Located just minutes east of Toronto, the Eagle Glen Community combines the closeness and convenience of city living with a suburban feel, and its prime location makes it a great place to call home. Classic two-storey homes are available, as well as side and back splits, bungalows, and future town-homes. Homes start at 1,800 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,858 square feet, some with triple car garages. John Boddy Homes offers traditional size lots with a minimum of 105 feet in depth and a limited selection of wide shallow lots and pond lots. With such a broad range of



house sizes and styles Eagle Glen has the ideal home to suit every preference. From the unique exteriors and charming streetscapes to the elegant interiors, various John Boddy Homes include such impressive standard features as vaulted ceilings, double door entries, décor columns, mirrored sliding closet doors, ceramic kitchen backsplashes, double basin bathroom vanities with make-up counters and so much more. Their gourmet kitchens, welcoming great rooms with cozy gas fireplaces and elegant dining rooms with coffered ceilings are all spacious and comfortable, making them the perfect location to enjoy time together with family or entertaining friends. In addition, some models include such impressive extras as classic french doors, transom windows and custom octagonal skylights allowing light to travel throughout the home for a bright and spacious feel.

For their homeowner's convenience, most John Boddy Homes include main floor laundry rooms, laundry chutes, kitchen

breakfast bars, private water closets, interior garage access, high efficiency furnaces and basement rough-ins for future bathrooms. Also, windows are vinyl clad wood which allows for interior custom colours with a maintenance free exterior. Other features include arched entryways, custom millwork, window mullions on all front and rear facades and decorative garage doors featuring appealing window lites. Custom landscaping packages and paved driveways are also included in all homes providing the renowned curb appeal that enhances the entire Eagle Glen community.

Innovative floorplan designs combined with an extensive array of standard features included with every new home have become a corporate trademark of John Boddy Homes and 'Eagle Glen'. Not only does a John Boddy Home offer such striking standard features, there are also a wealth of opportunities to upgrade, making their homes as unique as each individual homeowner. The 'Eagle Glen' Sales Office features a Décor Centre that contains vari-

ous upgrade items to select from in order to customize your home. Their high-tech electrical and décor consultants allow homebuyer's to make upgrade selections on site, enabling them to conveniently personalize their home.

When you purchase a new home in Eagle Glen there are no hidden closing costs. John Boddy Homes pays for education levies, development charges, water and hydro meter hookup fees, boulevard tree planting, landscape package and a paved driveway.

For a limited time only John Boddy Homes is currently offering a number of special incentive packages such as an upgrade master ensuite which includes a separate shower and upgrade tub, a granite kitchen countertop and \$5,000 in free upgrades. They are also including an oak staircase and one year of

Rogers services for free! Included in this package are home phone with 150 long distance minutes and 2 calling features, personal TV with free rental of a standard definition box, a HD digital box, VIP package, free on demand programming, Canadian timeshifting channels as well as Rogers Hi-Speed internet service and all are installed for free.

The Eagle Glen community offers many important neighbourhood amenities such as a brand new public elementary school opening in September 2009, places of worship, fully equipped parks and easy access to both Ajax and Go-Transit Services. Toronto is easily accessible from nearby Highways 401 and 407. Located just north of a host of shopping and recreation centres, 'Eagle Glen' allows residents all

the amenities of the urban lifestyle while providing the beauty and tranquility of the neighbouring countryside.

Since 1955, John Boddy has been involved in the construction of thousands of new homes throughout Ontario, and has earned a reputation as an accomplished builder of fine residential communities. Of significance are the award winning 1000-acre 'Bridlewood Community' developed during the 1960's and 1970's in Scarborough, the 'Forestbrook Community' in Pickering developed in the 1980's, 'Willowcreek' in Peterborough, and 'Eagle Ridge on the Green' in Ajax developed in the 1990's and early 2000's.

The John Boddy Homes' team of experienced management, planners, designers, supervisors, marketing and sales personnel have distinguished themselves by creating innovative and unique designs in truly outstanding communities that meet the needs and desires of today's families.

With five fully furnished model homes to view, a visit to Eagle Glen is a must. Drop by the Sales Presentation Centre located on Stevensgate Drive, north of Rossland Road West, one half kilometre west of Westney Road three kilometres north of Hwy 401. Sales office hours are Monday through Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Holidays 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Let their friendly knowledgeable staff help you determine which of the many home styles available is perfect for you and your family and get set to join the ever-growing 'Eagle Glen' family community by John Boddy Homes. For more information, please call (905) 619-1777 or visit the website at www.john-boddyhomes.com.

Rendering of Model
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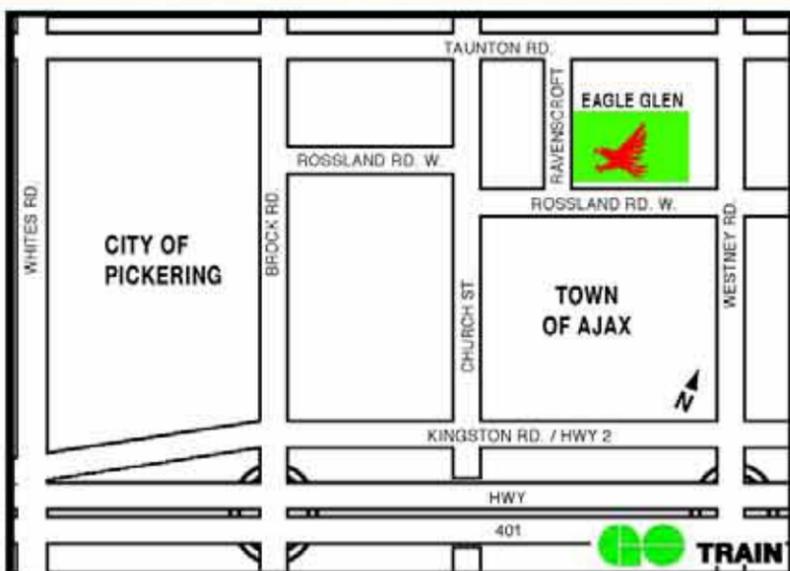
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Book Review

Imagining India: The Idea of a Nation

Renewed - By Nandan Nilekani (Co-Founder, Infosys Inc.)
Published by Penguin Group Inc.

"There are not a lot of executives around the world who are known simply by their first names. Silicon Valley has "Steve" -as in Jobs, Seattle has "Bill"-as in Gates, Omaha has "Warren" - as in Buffet. And Bangalore has "Nandan"-as in Nilekani.

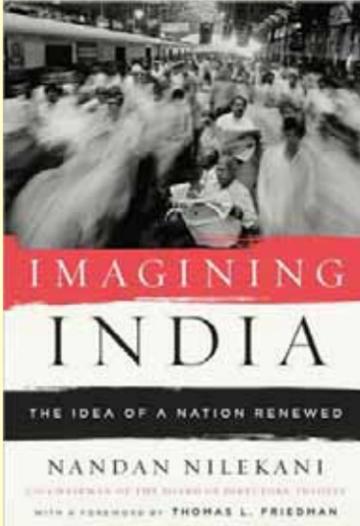
- From the Foreword by Thomas. L. Friedman

Reviewed by
Siva Sivapragasam

"Imagining India" is the story of a great Nation which has triggered tremendous social, political and cultural changes, and well authored by Nandan Nilekani, a pre-eminent Business leader and co-founder of Infosys, a Global leader in Information Technology.

The book reflects a fascinating study of India in it's present state and the challenges that the country faces in the future.

Nilekani's view is that the New India has now arrived in many places and in many ways. It is present in the Business community, in college campuses, in many villages and towns, in many schools. The Book is divided into four parts- the change of attitudes over the years, ideas which have been accepted but have yet to see results, lack of consensus on issues and urgent policies and finally the forgotten nooks of



policy and taking up those ideas that have been largely missing from public discourse.

The contents of the Book is well interspersed with comments from leading personalities in different fields. In writing this book, the author had interacted with many persons who are specialists in their chosen fields. This adds value to the book and makes the contents rich.

Apart from tracing the growth of the nation since independence, Nilekani also offers a fascinating window into the future of India. The book engages with the central ideas and challenges that face the country-from within the country and as a part of the global economy.

In this respect, the book can be viewed as a visionary look at the evolution and future of India by a pre-eminent business leader. It is an interpretation of the country's present and the future. Nilekani uses the rich experience he has gained at Infosys in charting out the ideas that are crucial for India's development and growth in the future.

Nandan Nilekani's "Imagining India" is a long journey into Incredible India and is certainly a collector's edition for quality reading.

(The Book is now available in leading Canadian Bookshops. The Publishers are Penguin Group Inc.)

City photo contest calls for creative Toronto images

The City of Toronto today announced it is holding a "Building a great city - together" photo contest. The City is looking for powerful images that evoke Toronto's spirit, energy and unique character. The contest is open to anyone 18 years of age or older.

"This photo contest is a way to tap into the tremendous wealth of creative talent we have in Toronto and for the public to engage with local government," said Mayor David Miller.

Judging will take place in a number of categories including City programs and services; parks and playgrounds; landscapes and gardens; urban wildlife and pets; the waterfront; local events and festivals; people at work, play and on the move; architecture/buildings; culture and entertainment; and Toronto's neighbourhoods and history - all tied to the theme of building a great city together.

Entries will be evaluated based on content, image quality, creativity, uniqueness, relevance to the contest theme and category, and overall visual appeal. A panel of three judges will review short-listed photos and winners will be notified in July 2009.

Winning photos and those that receive honourable mention will be posted online. Photographers with a winning submission will also receive special City of Toronto prizes.

The contest will run from April 22 through June 12, 2009. The contest is being run on the Flickr website at www.flickr.com/groups/torontophotocontest. Those wishing to submit photos to the contest must be a member of Flickr - membership is free.

More information about this photo contest, including rules and instructions, are available at www.toronto.ca/photocontest.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

416-321-2228

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Fareed Kuhafa* BSc
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<p>\$289,900</p> <p>NEILSON & MORNINGSIDE 3+1 B/R, 3 W/R, town home, with sep living & family rooms high demand area, w/o bsmt, close to schools, shopp & all amenities</p>	<p>\$299,900</p> <p>NEILSON & MORNINGSIDE Very well maintained 3+1 B/R, 3 W/R, town home, with sep living & family rooms high demand area, w/o bsmt, close to schools, shopp & all amenities</p>	<p>\$364,900</p> <p>MARKHAM & STEELES Location! Location! Location! 3+1 B/R, 3 W/R open concept home with fin bsmt, double dr entry, move in condition. Quiet Neighborhood. Close To Schools</p>	<p>\$429,900</p> <p>DELANEY & CHURCH (AJAX) 3+2 B/R, 3 W/R, home w/ELEVATOR spacious & comfortable, family/R with cathedral ceiling & fire place, corner lot close to school, GO train & all amenities</p>
<p>\$539,900</p> <p>14TH & 9TH LINE (MARKHAM) absolutely gorgeous 4B/R, 4W/R, home in Boxgrove area 40K in upgrades by builder, HW flrg, grnte counter top</p>	<p>\$374,900</p> <p>MARKHAM & DENISON 3B/R, 3W/R, home w/upgrades HW flrg, oak strcase, lrg drway Close to schools & all amenities</p>	<p>\$359,900</p> <p>MARKHAM & BUROAK 3B/R, 3W/R, home w/open concept mdrn kit, ss applns, HW flrg, Close to schools, GO & all amenities</p>	<p>2 Lots - 48'x200' LAND FOR SALE \$249,000 each or 3200sqft Luxury custom home \$749,900.</p>
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United Nations and Co-Chairs Surrender to Sinhala Chauvinism

by Arun Senathirajah

Latest report received from Vanni Sri Lanka as the last serving hospital at Puthumaththalan has been attacked. Earlier Kilinochchi and Puthukudiyiruppu hospitals were bombed by Sri Lankan Air forces. Even Sri Lankan Defence Secretary Gothabaya Rajapakse declared openly that Puthukudiyiruppu hospital is a legitimate target to be attacked, just before the attack. Do the ICs (international countries) need further proof of this crime committed by the Defence Secretary of the so called 'democratically elected government of Sri Lanka. At the request of Sri Lanka the international countries have banned Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam since they claim they respect the democratically elected government's request. At the same time Sri Lanka persistently and systematically breaching international humanitarian and human rights law and committing acts of genocide against the Tamil community.

Camping Tamils and Settling Sinhalese

Sri Lanka has already started forcibly putting war escaping and IDP (Internally Displaced People) Tamils in internment camps for longer period as beggars for food and tortures them endlessly and brings Sinhalese to grab their lands under the pretext of resettlement and redevelopment programs. Showing the ICs as they are waiting for resettlements, and when get the funds Sri Lanka government use the funds against them. Sri Lanka is well experienced in this strategy as recently proved in appropriating the Tsunami funds that were channelled by various governments and NGOs for the NorthEast of Sri Lanka.

Silencing Tamil Diaspora Voice

The UN and the Co-chair countries apply preach democracy and tries to protect the Sri Lanka's genocide agenda under that cover. These countries should have applied the same democratic principle among immigrant Tamil citizens to see whether they support the LTTE or not. They are the right people make a decision to ban a movement they generally believe that is the only movement that fight back the Tamil genocide. These countries have to listen to the opinion of the Tamil immigrant citizens. These countries have failed to get consent from the Tamil Diaspora before the ban is imposed. LTTE at any circumstances did not involve any activities against the countries which banned them. In Canada Quebec is allowed to decide on its separation issue. Canada in its Quebec National question allowed to Quebec Province to hold referendum by Quebec people only, not by other Canadians. Why should Canada ban a voice of Tamils the LTTE which claims to fight for Tamils cause in Sri Lanka without considering Canadian Tamil citizens? Are their democratic right on this issue is suppressed?

The United Nations Oppressor Role

UN has taken the side of the oppressor and encouraging the genocide on the oppressed Tamils in the name of convenient coverage of safeguarding sovereignty of Sri Lanka. Eelam Tamils dead or alive have being used as tools to raise funds for Sri Lanka. By undertaking genocidal war on Tamils Sri Lanka has to spend more of its borrowings and resources and face foreign exchange reserve and economic problem. Now the hope is to replenish deficits and debts from the IMF. In order for the IMF to facilitate the already applied \$1.9

billion loan, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and Under Secretary General John Holmes are making calculated and gentle touch statements with the glossary terms 'democracy', 'sovereignty' etc., hiding the brutal fact of Sri Lanka government's genocide on Tamils. This is evident as revealed in the last week of April 2009 by Mexico's Heller who chaired the session and by Britain UN representative John Sawers, 'Sri Lanka shouldn't be penalized for what it is doing' was a decision of the UN Security Council. 'For what Sri Lanka is doing' UN has its own recent figures released on April 24, 2009, almost 6500 Tamil civilians have been killed and more than 16,000 injured since January 2009. But for the UN these are legitimate since a democratic sovereignty can undertake genocide. It is interesting to note that only for Eelam or Sri Lankan Tamils a custodian government is allowed to commit genocide, not for any other race in the planet of earth according to the world body the United Nations.

The Co-chair's Role

Mahinda Rajapaksa was encouraged by the international community itself in the use of heavy weapons against the civilians as they have supplied funds and weapons, in competition with who is contributing more to Sri Lanka. The western countries have failed in it, China is taking leading role. In the view of Co-chair countries USA, Norway, Japan and European Union countries Tamils are senseless animals so that they will accept their call to surrender the arms to the genocide killer Mahinda Rajapakse's regime. Another underlying fact is they think we still trust them. While as a peace negotiator shamelessly they surrendered to Sinhala chauvinism and failed to mediate an accept-

able solution to the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Today echoing that surrender asking Tamil Tigers to surrender their arms to the killer and get massacred by them as it has happened to Tamil prisoners in Sri Lanka prisons by its custodial guardian the Government of Sri Lanka. Even in the current mass genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka they have no courage even to supply food and medicines to the starving and wounded Tamils caught in the war, breaking Mahinda Rajapakse barrier.

No Hope from Obama

The US President Obama Barrack administration is in constant contact with Indian FP makers, who support the Sri Lankan war on Tamils. While Tamils are massacred in Sri Lanka's 'safety zones', there was no any constructive action from President Obama or State Secretary Hilary Clinton to supply at least immediate relief to the dying Tamils in Vanni. This shows that Obama administration is also waiting for post LTTE period and will not do anything that may not please Indian FP makers National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan and Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon.

Visit of the foreign ministers of Britain and France

Visit of the foreign ministers of Britain and France David Miliband and Bernard Kouchner brought a new lesson for them. The ministers' insisted that "The UN had an agreement with the Government to send a mission into the conflict zone to help to assess and address civilian needs. That agreement has not been implemented. It must be". "Here the refusal to allow the UN, the aid agencies, and the media full and proper access is quite wrong", they said. "As members of the UN Security Council we do not shy away from the responsi-



bility of sovereign governments and the international community to protect civilians. Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, has joined us in describing the failure to protect civilians in Sri Lanka as truly shocking". But what constructive and forceful action has been taken to avoid the genocide? Nothing much is heard.

New Middle East in 'South Asia'

China that has funded Colombo and has supplied the country with lethal and even prohibited weapons of conventional warfare knowingly for internal use is sitting on UN action, maintaining that what is happening is purely an internal matter of Sri Lanka. The US, India and the EU countries have to make a big shift against Sri Lanka in the near future, not because of sympathy or kind heartedness on getting killed Tamils in the 'safety zones' (safety for the killers) announced by the Sri Lanka government, by the Sri Lanka government forces itself, but because of ever increasing presence of China in that soil. Egregious human rights violations only matters for these countries if it happens for their advantage only.

Beijing has increased arms and funds supply to Sri Lanka since 2007, when western countries started agitation on human right violations issue.

All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) leader Jeyaram Jeyalalitha, has publicly declared that if her party won, she would ensure a separate state for Tamils. Will that happen? All the Tamils in the world should unite against genocide and support her in the new hope.

The Bottom LINE! - Economic Seminar

The bottom Line! - The Economic Seminar, a breakfast event was hosted by The Scarborough Walk of Fame and jointly presented by the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce, the Canada Pakistan Business Council and the Canada Sri Lanka Business Council. Senior Vice-President and Chief Economist of Scotiabank Dr. Warren Jestin delivered the Economic Update to the participants.

The Scarborough Walk of Fame (SWOF) event showcases citizens, past and present, whose accomplishments bring pride to the community and inspire young people to follow in their footsteps. It was created in 2004 by a group of community leaders concerned with the negative and misleading portrayal of Scarborough by mainstream media and the social and economic consequences this type of coverage typically has on a community.

The SWOF goal is to produce annual events that portray Scarborough in a positive light and help develop future leaders.

Above breakfast event was held at Centennial College Residence & Conference Centre, 940 Progress Ave. On April 22nd, 2009

SWOF'S this year's gala evening is scheduled for May 28th, 2009 at Delta Toronto East Hotel.



Participants at the Seminar



Mano Thillainathan, Manager Scotiabank, Dr. Warren Jestin, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist, Scotiabank, Christine Williams, District Vice President, Scotiabank, and at right, Sangeetha Isabel from Business Development Bank



Siva Sivayogapathy, Khalid Mohamed, Mano Thillainathan & Christine Williams

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Permanent Leasing Opportunity(s)

Jane Finch Mall is a 270,000 square foot enclosed shopping centre anchored by a Price Chopper grocery store, a Shoppers Drug Mart pharmacy and a Home Target junior department store. We are seeking motivated, established, and professional operators to lease space on a permanent basis to each of (a) a Sari store, and (b) a Sri Lankan and/or Indian fast food restaurant.

To present your business plan including the range and type of apparel proposed to be offered or the proposed menu for the restaurant, and to inquire about available premises/rates/etc., please call Megan McGowan, Salesperson, at S & H Realty Corporation, Real Estate Broker. Direct line is 905-625-6106. The S & H Realty office number is 416-364-7810 x 2.

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Dadi Janki's programme

This will be held at Don Bosco Secondary School,
2 St Andrews Blvd, Toronto.
Islington Ave and Hwy 401

On Sunday May 10th, 2009.

The public programme begins at 9.00 am

For Brahmans the programme begins earlier at 7.30 am

7.30 - 8.00 am - Meditation

8.00 - 9.00 am - Avyakt Murli with Sister Mohini

9.00 - 9.30 am - Bhog Offering. Sr Mohini will take bhog to Baba and bring a message for Canada.

9.30 - 10.30 am - Dadi Janki's Master Class on How to Handle the Present Crisis

10.30 - 11.00 am - Toli and Blessings

11.00 - 12 noon - Dadi Will meet Canada instruments and main Brahman souls. Then Dadi Janki has some private meetings.

Dadi's Flight arrives at Pearson Airport at 8.00 p.m. on Saturday evening May 9th by Air Canada at Terminal 1

Dadi's will leave from Pearson Airport and we may give send off at 6.30 pm from AirCanada Terminal 1 on Sunday evening May 10th.

IN Baba's yaad, your sister, Denise

BK Sister Denise, National Coordinator

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization

897 College Street, Toronto, ON M6H 1A1

416 537 3034

Sermon from the cross- The Seven Words'

During these times when the Tamils are attracting awareness to the plight of their kith and kin caught up in a death-trap in the Vanni area of Sri Lanka, Thaya Ponniah, editor of the Siraku newspaper, speaking at the Good Friday service of the Tamil Christian Church of Canada asserted that Jesus himself sought awareness when he cried, "My God, my God Why hast thou forsaken me?", when his life was about to depart.

He invited the attention of the Almighty God that his services for the emancipation of the world should continue. The Good Friday service was held by the TCCC with talks and songs pertaining to the seven words that Jesus uttered from the cross.

The spiritual implications of the seven words were given by Revds: Isaac Selvaratnam, Bobby Mather, Milton; Mrs. Daisy Hensman and Messrs: Thaya

Ponniah, William and Joel Joseph. 'Salvation for the repentant at any stage'; 'God's awareness of man's weakness'; 'importance of human relationships'; 'The need for God's blessings to continue the work for the world's redemption'; 'God's thirst for the souls'; 'the satisfaction of Christ after fulfilling his mission' and the submission of his soul to God at the end'-were the major components of the sermon from the cross expressed in seven words.

The Church choir provided the message of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus at the cross with sweetly and piously rendered songs and lilting music. Junesh Chinniah, chairman of the executive committee of the church thanked all those who helped to make the Good Friday service a memorable experience for the enrichment of the soul.

By: JJA

Every penny counts at St. Brendan school fundraiser for Rouge Valley Centenary Emergency

McDonald's "Save Time, Save Lives" Campaign coin drive adopted by local students

The "Save Time, Save Lives" Campaign launched by 23 Scarborough-area McDonald's restaurants has been adopted by students at St. Brendan Catholic School.

McDonald's is currently fundraising for a portable ultrasound machine for Rouge Valley Centenary's (RVC) Emergency Department. St. Brendan, a local elementary school in the Rouge Valley area, has been filling paint cans with pennies for only a few weeks and have already collected \$2,500 to date. They are still going strong and are very excited about this initiative.

"Philanthropy isn't taught; it's nurtured by supplying children the opportunity to give back," says school principal Dan Koenig. "Children understand the importance of their local community hospital, so supporting it hasn't been a tough sell."

"Of course, having the Principal and all of the dedicated teachers at St. Brendan behind the campaign is instrumental and a great example of community spirit", says Dale Bartlett, McDonald's Owner/Operator who helped spearhead the campaign. "The school has created a healthy competition between classrooms where the winning class will get a McDonald's lunch party for their hard work."

Every single Emergency patient will benefit from this portable ultrasound machine donation. The equipment can be used on men, women and children alike and, even if a patient doesn't require an ultrasound,

faster diagnoses enables improved patient flow and reduced wait times for all.

Rouge Valley Health System Foundation - Enhancing care in the community

The Rouge Valley Health System Foundation's mission is to partner with the community to invest in superior healthcare at Rouge Valley Health System. The Foundation raises funds to support the purchase of leading-edge medical equipment and support major capital expansion projects.

Contacts: Kerry McLeish, Communications Officer, RVHS Foundation, (416) 281-7265

Dan Koenig, Principal, St. Brendan Catholic School, (416) 393-5359

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YOUTH EXPO - 2009

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www.Mahajanan.org

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www.GodsOwnChildren.com



THE WORLD FASTEST MOVIE Script to Screening in 12 Days WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT

Suresh's Accident Puts Guinness Dream on Hold. The movie which was to commence on April 13 at Pudhucherry, India, has been postponed till May 22, 2009. Unfortunately, the actor Suresh Joachim met with an accident while rehearsing a stunt for the movie.

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Leon's Furniture Store Celebrates 100 Years in Business

Leon's Furniture Ltd., one of Canada's leading Furniture stores is celebrating its 100 years of business with the Canadian public. "The made in Canada" success story is being celebrated throughout the country to mark this important milestone in its history.

The story of Leons Furniture started with the Founder Mr. Ablan Leon, a hardworking immigrant from Lebanon who ventured into the furniture field when he sold a mattress which he had bought as a wedding gift for his son, to a passerby outside his dry goods store, for more than the

price he paid for it. After 100 years, Leons chain today includes 64 large super stores across the country where approximately 20 million Canadians visit Leon's store each year. Mr. Terry Leon, the grandson of Founder Ablan Leon, is the President and CEO. His first job at Leon's was folding flyers, when he was seven years old and his payment was a bottle of coke and got to keep the deposit. Around 3,750 associates now work for the Company.

Apart from the Business activ-

ities, Leon's is also engaged in charitable work. The Company is donating furniture to 64 Hospitals to commemorate its Centenary celebrations. Leon's is also partnering with Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada, donating to the Association's national office and furnishing more than 100 locations across the country.

Seen here are some pictures of the Centenary celebrations at the Store in Scarborough.



Balloon blast



Terry Leon at Boys and Girls Club



Terry Leon at Boys and Girls Club 2



Terry Leon with Hospital Staff

RBC Royal Bank's "Give from the Heart to Save a Heart" Campaign launch

ECGs for Rouge Valley's Cardiac Care Program to boost cardiac screenings

The campaign launch was held on April 16th at 2867 Ellesmere Road participated by senior RBC and RVHS officials along with media.

From April 16 until June 14, 2009, 14 RBC Royal Bank branches across Scarborough, Ajax and Pickering will be fundraising for three Electrocardiogram (ECG) machines for Rouge Valley Health System's Cardiac Care Program. The "Give from the Heart to Save a Heart" campaign includes a raffle with numerous prizes, in-branch donations and a Commercial Financial Services banking appeal. The campaign will close with a celebration barbecue, including a fundraising Hula-Hoop-a-thon, on Sunday June 14, 2009.

An Electrocardiogram (ECG) is the most commonly performed cardiac test; it is a valuable screening tool for a variety of cardiac abnormalities, and often times rules out heart attacks or diagnoses lethal arrhythmia. ECGs are performed on many patients in the hospital in the Cardiac Diagnostics Service, on the in-patient units and in the Emergency Departments. ECGs are also performed on every patient over 50 years of age who is admitted for elective surgery.

Rouge Valley Health System's Cardiac Care Program is a Centre of Excellence and is considered one of the best of any community hospital in Ontario. Making more



ECGs available will enable improved patient flow and reduced wait times for east Toronto and west Durham.

RBC has made a commitment to support patients at Rouge Valley Centenary (RVC) and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering (RVAP) hospital campuses. "As a dedicated supporter of local health and wellness causes, we are pleased to partner with the Rouge Valley Health System - a world-class health care centre

right in our backyard. We know a healthy community is a strong community," says Lisa Gallacher, Regional Vice President, RBC. "This campaign is about keeping Rouge Valley at the forefront of acute care service by ensuring that leading-edge diagnostic tools are available to all members of our community."

Some of the notable attendees were: Jennifer Tory, RBC's Regional President, Lisa Gallacher, RBC's Regional Vice



Terry Leon with VIP's



Terry Leon with VIP's 2

President for Scarborough/Pickering/Ajax; Dr. Joe Ricci, Program Chief, RVHS Cardiac Care Program; and Dr. Paul Galiwango, RVHS' newest cardiac physician, www.rougevalley.ca/rvhsf

About Rouge Valley Health System Foundation

The Rouge Valley Health System Foundation's mission is to partner with the community to invest in superior healthcare at Rouge Valley Health System. The Foundation raises funds to support the purchase of leading-edge medical equipment and support major capital expansion projects.

About RBC

RBC supports programs and services that improve community resources and enhance quality of life. RBC donated over \$12.5 million to health related organizations in 2008. For more information, please visit www.rbc.com.

Contacts: Kerry McLeish, Communications Officer, RVHSF (905) 683-2320 x1227 or (416) 281-7265, kmcleish@rougevalley.ca Judy Dobbs, Director of Communications, RBC (416) 974-3178, Judy.dobbs@rbc.com

WORDS OF PEACE

Hidden Treasure

The problem with common approaches to bringing about peace on earth, says Maharaji, is the assumption that it needs to be legislated or mandated. Maharaji has spent decades traveling constantly around the world with a message of hope. He speaks of an individual experience of peace available to anyone who desires it.

"It's said that necessity is the mother of invention," Maharaji says. "What you are looking for, you already have. It does not have to be created. It does not have to be manufactured. You already have peace inside of you; you just have to discover it."

Discovering that peace, he says, is like unearthing a treasure.

"Imagine there is a person who he is really, really poor," he says. "He's so poor that he has to beg every day. He has made himself a little hut out of some cloth and some poles, and every day, he gets up and he begs.

"Suppose I know that under this little hut of his there is a gold mine. Should I tell him or not?"

"There are people who will say, 'No, you would really be doing him a disservice. The next thing you know, he's going to be miserable. He's happy now.' So should I tell him or not?"

A person who has no peace in his life is just like that poor person, Maharaji says.

"All the begging we do every day to make peace! Not from strangers; that's not who we go begging in front of. It's our own family. It's our own friends. It's the people we know. We're begging and begging for peace, barely make ends meet, while under our hut is a gold mine.

"You do not have to beg. You are richer than you realize, richer than you have ever hoped for. That's my message."

After public addresses around the world, Maharaji often encourages people to ask questions about discovering peace within.



A: Express to yourself your sincere desire for peace. Express your own want, your own need for peace in your life. If you don't feel this thirst for peace, then find it, because it's the thirst that will lead you to water. The thirst will take over and lead you to the well-a well within full of sweet, clear water that can quench your thirst.

Q: Shouldn't we as human beings focus on alleviating suffering in the world rather than just worrying about our inner state?

A: Inside has much to do with the expression of what takes place on the outside. When there is no peace within, there are wars

Q: So many people say they're looking for peace. If it's as accessible as you say, why don't more people find it?

A: They don't know where to look for it. It requires a whole change of plan when what you are looking for is something you already have.

Think of all those explorers who went to different continents. There was a difference between those who went to discover and those who went to create something.

People search for peace, for real joy, like they don't have it. That's why they don't find it, because the reality is they do already have it. It needs to be discovered, not created.

Q: Then how do you go about discovering peace? Where would I start?

on the outside.

I have nothing to sell. If I can make you think that because you are alive you have the opportunity to be in peace, to be in joy; that peace can become not a fantasy, but a reality in your life; that you don't have to beg, because there is a gold mine inside-then I have done my job.

You need to have peace in your life-with my help, without my help, I don't care. Whatever it takes, get it! If you can't find it, I can help. That's what it's all about.

To learn more about Maharaji, visit:

- www.tprf.org
- www.maharaji.net
- www.contactinfo.net
- Call 1 877 707 3221 Eng
- 416 431 5000 Tamil

Yoga means ultimate inclusiveness. The word yoga literally means union. When you have become one with everything, this is yoga. Yoga does not mean twisting your body, tying your limbs into knots or holding your breath or doing some other circus. The word Yoga means, in your experience, everything has become one. How can everything become one? You are you; I am me, isn't it? No question of these two becoming one.

Do you know today modern science is telling you the whole



gies may not be in your experience, but you can easily infer and see, if one has to function, there is some kind of energy making it happen.

So these are the four realities for you - body, mind, emotion and energy. If you employ your body and try to reach your ultimate nature, we call this Karma Yoga,

The Right Concoction



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 416 300 3010 or email Toronto@ishafoundation.org

existence is just one energy manifesting itself in a million different ways? It's a scientific fact, isn't it? Maybe it's not in your perception, but that is the reality. So this is what science said. And the religions of the world have been screaming for a long time that God is everywhere. Whether you say God is everywhere or you say everything is same energy, are we talking about a different reality or the same reality? God is everywhere, everything is same energy. It's the same reality expressed in two different ways. A scientist has not experienced this reality. He has somehow mathematically deduced this reality. He has no experience that everything is one energy, he does not experience this and that as one. Mathematically he knows that this and that are one. A religious person also has not experienced it but he believes it that it's all God. Now a yogi means somebody who is not willing to settle for deductions or belief systems, he wants to know it. If you have such a longing that you want to know it, you are unwilling to settle for other people's deductions or belief systems then you have to pursue Yoga.

Anything that leads to the union is called yoga, whichever way. Now you can only work with what you have - your body, your mind, your emotion. Your ener-

yoga of action. If you employ your intelligence and try to reach your ultimate nature, we call this Gnana Yoga, yoga of intelligence. If you employ your emotion and try to reach your ultimate nature, we call this Bhakti Yoga, yoga of devotion or emotion. If you transform your inner energies and try to reach your ultimate nature, we call this Kriya Yoga, yoga of transforming energies. These are the only four ways you can do it because these are the only four things that you really have.

So if you want to get somewhere all these four aspects, body, mind, emotion and energy has to function together; only then you get somewhere. With one aspect you don't get anywhere. Every one of you is a combination of these four things, but a different kind of combination; a unique combination.

So accordingly the right kind of yoga has to be mixed in the right proportion, otherwise it doesn't work. It is because of this, in the yogic traditions so much stress has been laid about having a live Guru because he will mix the right kind of concoction. Unless it is mixed properly, even if it's the best thing, it doesn't work. What is working wonderfully for one person is not working for the other person because it is wrong prescription. Medicine is good but wrong prescription.

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TRILLIUM 24 HOUR FAMINE EVENT

Grade 7 & 8 students and staff at Trillium School in Markham had fun staying overnight when they took part in the school's 24-Hour Famine Event on Thursday April 23rd and Friday April 24th, 2009. The students were involved in a series of learning activities, games and events, all the while going without food for a full 24-hour period. By getting a sense of what it feels like to be hungry, the students were able to develop a greater appreciation for the reality many children face everyday in developing countries.

The other students in Senior

Kindergarten to grade 6 supported the Famine Event by making personal sacrifices at home under the supervision of their parents. In the weeks leading up to the event, a school-wide education awareness campaign helped students to understand the issues affecting children in developing countries - issues such as hunger, poverty, children's rights, child labour, poor water quality, and lack of education. Most importantly, the school community is currently raising money to support the good work being done by Plan Canada.

If you'd like to support this cause, please go to the school's homepage at www.trillium-school.ca and click on the 24-hour Famine Donation link.



Trillium School students at 24 hr Famine Event

Volunteer Services thanks its own

During National Volunteer Week, the Rouge Valley Centenary Volunteers Services held their Annual Volunteer Recognition Evening on Monday April 20, 2009.

Volunteer award winners

included Vidhya Vivekananda, Youth Service Awards, 700+ Services Hours; Buvani Sivagnanasunderam and Thaksha Kaneshapillai, Youth Champions; and June Fitzgerald, 40 Year Service Award.

Heartfelt thanks to Joanne Moffitt, Tapestry Gift Shop and Country Style Donuts for generously donating prizes.

Photos by Akilah Dressekie and Roselyn Sagar-Lal



June Fitzgerald (centre) with Sheri Loosemore, Manager Volunteer Services, and Darrell Sewell, VP RVHS Human Resources



Nash Jan on left



Group of Youth Volunteer Award Winners



Second annual Streetsville Arts Fest at Streetsville

This is just a quick heads up that the second annual Streetsville Arts Fest is slated to bring much colour, music, song and dance to the Village of Streetsville in Mississauga. The dates are Friday May 22 to Sun. May 31, 2009. More info is available. The Streetsville Arts Fest is being organized by the Streetsville Arts Collective (SAC), a not for profit community group.

Contact: Atiya Ahsan, Member, Ad Hoc Committee, Streetsville Arts Collective
Co-Chair, Arts Fest Committee



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Waterloo Region Tamil Community elects new board for TCAWR



Kitchener: Members of Waterloo region and City of Guelph Tamil community held their annual general meeting on the 18th of April at the KW Counselling Centre in Kitchener. A large number of members, their family and guests were present.

Mrs. Rajivi Nadarajah, the secretary of the Tamil Cultural

Spotlight festival in Kitchener. The Spotlight festival was organised by the Government of Ontario and Ontario Arts Council. TCAWR also donated a sum of \$ 2,100 to an IDP facility run by the Ramakrishna Mission, Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. A very successful Garage sale was held to raise funds, Tamil Thai Pongal (Mattu

Sivakumar Somasundram thanked all members for their kind co-operation in preserving Tamil culture, Arts and community spirit in the region. Tamil culture is a link that unities all members and their values. We have immigrated from around the world and should live unitedly in peace and harmony. Our organi-

was elected as the new President of the association for the term 2009/2010. In his maiden speech he stressed the need to encourage Tamil language and culture among our children in the region. He explained his vision to bring in more membership and expand new programs.

The membership elected the

Joint Secretary - Mr. Ram Ramadass
 Joint Treasurer - Mr. Bala Thambypillai
 Auditor - Mr. Sivakumar Somasundram



Association of Waterloo Region (TCAWR) welcomed all members to the Annual General Meeting and Tamil New Year celebrations. In her annual report she highlighted the events that took place in 2008. Tamil Arts and Culture was highlighted in the mainstream media when TCAWR participated, for the first time, at the

Pongal) was held at Perrin Farm, Ayr, Ontario; which was a lot of fun and very traditionally held. Members of our community were also recognized for their achievements in arts and volunteering by the government establishment for the city and were awarded for their contributions.

The outgoing President Mr.

sation is proud to have a diverse membership from Sri Lanka, South India and Malaysia under one umbrella.

Mr. Bala Thambypillai, the Director of Finance submitted the financial report. The Secretary dissolved the executive committee to make way for the election.

Mr. Prakash Venkataraman

following members to the new executive committee.

- Mr. Prakash Venkataraman - President
- Mr. Venkat Ramachandran - Vice President
- Mr. Dennis Loyola - Secretary
- Mr. Nagul Sundram - Director of Finance
- Mrs. Rajivi Nadarajah -

- Director of Public Relations - Mrs. Indra Logendran
- Director of Cultural Affairs - Mr. Suresh Abraham
- Prof. Pala Kannapan
- Mr. Thevaker Athithan
- Mr. Athithan Arunasalam
- Mr. Subramaniam
- Mrs. Rathy Abraham

Tamil Cultural Association honours community volunteers

Kitchener: Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region honoured local community volunteers during the National Volunteer Week in Kitchener. The volunteers were presented with certificates by senior members of TCAWR. The certificates were authorized by the Government of Ontario.



TAMIL CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF WATERLOO REGION

(Kitchener - Waterloo - Cambridge - Guelph)

<http://www.tamilculturewaterloo.org>

Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region partnered Ducks unlimited Canada, a non-profit organisation working to protect and conserve wetland habitats in North America, in forming the Tamil text on the map.

Below is a note received from Ducks unlimited Canada.

Thank you so much for your

feedback. First - I wanted to share this. I had a lovely story passed along by a student teacher. She was in a Toronto classroom with a young Tamil speaking boy - newly-arrived - who's friend was translating for him to help him get used to his new school. Apparently he had been quite shy and withdrawn but when they started to work with this project he saw the Tamil text on the map and became very excited because he could read it.

He began to explain about what he had already learned about wetlands and water from home. Apparently it was a very exciting experience for everyone in the class - all the students started interacting and sharing what they knew and the boy now felt included. Thank you again, Warmest regards

Merebeth Switzer
 National Education Coordinator
 Ducks Unlimited Canada

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Arun Senathirajah, ACIB, MBA Banking Mgmt

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ON Thursday morning, my neighbors and I joined an orderly line in front of the election desk at the end of our street. We did what the public-service ads had been urging us to do for weeks: “Give them the finger.” The polling officer didn’t even raise her head. After dipping a plastic straw into a bottle of purple ink, she drew a blotchy line down the middle finger of my left hand. Then I stepped up to the voting machine to press a button in India’s 15th general election.

The scene was repeating itself across Mumbai. At another polling station, I saw Bollywood B-listers happily show off their ink-smearing digits to TV cameras. A practice that had originally been instituted to ward off electoral scams like ballot-box stuffing (we call it “booth capturing”) was transformed into a proud reaffirmation of faith in Indian democracy.

In the weeks leading up to this election, the ink smearing became a source of inspiration for a barrage of pun-studded campaigns aimed at getting normally apathetic middle-class Indians to fulfill their civic responsibility. The election — with more than 714 million voters — was also a fantastic advertising opportunity. An automobile parts company ran an ad of a finger imprinted with an ink mark in the shape of a car battery. “Vote for a trouble-free five-year term,” was its message. A purveyor of tea, India’s pick-me-up, declared: “If you continue sleeping, so will our politicians. Wake up and vote!”

On Thursday, many Indians ignored that advice. Turnout was sluggish across the city, but the figures were especially disappointing in affluent South Mumbai, which had been a particular focus of the get-out-the-vote effort. Only 43.3 percent of eligible voters in the area exercised their franchise, but that wasn’t much of a surprise. Rich Indians have long known that they command more powerful means to influence politicians than votes.

This contradicts India’s perception of itself as a deeply rooted democracy. Democracy is the superior virtue we claim as we smugly survey the chaos that military dictators have visited upon Pakistan. Democracy is our defense against China’s superior record of alleviating poverty and raising standards of health and literacy.

SELLING DEMOCRACY (AND TEA) IN INDIA

By Naresh Fernandes,
Mumbai, India



art by: Emma Houlston

And yet our inability to protect religious minorities is obvious to the thousands of Muslim victims of the Gujarat riots of 2002. Our most famous painter, M. F. Husain, who lives in exile under threats from extremists for daring to paint Hindu deities in the nude, knows that we have yet to secure the right to free ex-

pression. And the brutality against ethnic separatist movements in the northeast and Kashmir demonstrates our unwillingness to make pragmatic compromises.

Our experiment with democracy has been far more successful than some others, but despite regular elections, it has failed many Indians. After all, in South

Mumbai the government responds to its residents — whether they stand in the sun for that purple streak or not.

Naresh Fernandes is the editor of *Time Out India*.
[NYTimes.com]

NEPAL’S MAOIST PRIME MINISTER PRACHANDA RESIGNS



Nepal Prime Minister Prachanda

Nepal’s Maoist prime minister has resigned, following a confrontation with the president over a controversial decision to fire the army chief. The resignation plunges the country into political uncertainty and is a setback to a peace deal that brought the Maoists into the political mainstream.

Prime Minister Prachanda announced his resignation in a nationwide address hours after President Ram Baran Yadav overturned an order by his Maoist-led government sacking the army chief.

The Maoists had accused the army chief of defying government orders not to hire new recruits, and reinstating eight generals the Defense Ministry had dismissed.

The president, who belongs to an opposition party, said the Maoist decision was “illegal and unconstitutional.”

Mr. Prachanda called the president’s move an attack on Nepal’s infant democracy and the peace process. He said the president had no right to act as

a parallel power. He said he is stepping down for the protection of democracy.

Prime Minister Prachanda, who is also known as Pushpa Kamal Dahal, resigned after two parties in the coalition withdrew support to protest the firing of the army chief, leaving the Maoists with a thin majority.

Nepali Times Editor Kunda Dixit says the Maoist decision had met with strong opposition from virtually all political parties.

“The Maoists are politically isolated,” said Dixit. “All the other parties have now said that they were wrong. Their argument is that the Maoists bypassed the president, who is actually the ceremonial commander of the army, and they are using the threat of mob violence in order to get away with it.”

The standoff between the Maoists and the army chief stems from his refusal to integrate former rebel fighters into the army as stipulated by the peace

deal. The army chief says the fighters cannot join the military because they are politically indoctrinated.

Demonstrations were held in the capital, Kathmandu, by supporters of both the Maoists and the opposition. There are fears street protests by supporters of the former rebels will intensify following the Prime Minister’s resignation.

Prachanda led a decade-long insurgency before he renounced violence and embraced multi-party democracy under a 2006 peace deal.

The former rebels went on to win the most seats in elections held last year, bringing Prachanda to the helm of the government. But in the past year, the Maoists have been criticized for muzzling the press and using violence to intimidate opponents.

The latest crisis could imperil the 2006 peace deal. As part of the deal, Nepal’s monarchy was abolished, and a new constitution is being framed for the country.
[voa news]

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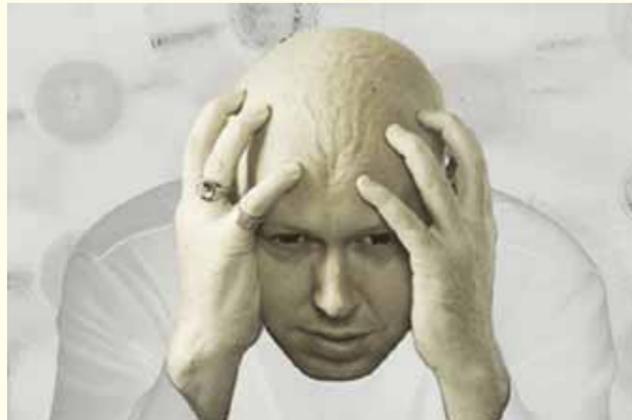
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Whiff of realism

Kunguma Poovum Konjum Puraavum

Capital Film Works' products have begun to create much expectation among the movie-going public thanks to its path-breaking offering, 'Chennai - 600028.' So it is but natural that 'Kunguma Poovum Konjum Puraavum' (U/A) has kindled a lot of interest. The title has a poetic feel to it and reminds you of Chandrababu's popular refrain of yore. By taking up a serious theme this time, with a new director and an unknown cast, producer Charan seems to say that the trick lies in selecting a strong story with a well-chalked out screenplay. Directing so many debut-making faces couldn't have been easy for writer-director Rajamohan, a first timer himself. He turns the challenge into an advantage because the fresh casting enhances the realism of 'KPKP'

— it is as though you are in Muttam and the nearby areas watching a true-to-life tale unfold...

Kuselan (Ramakrishnan) is in Class XII and the entry of new student Thulasi (Tananya) creates quite a stir in the minds of the adolescents. Thulasi soon finds her soul mate in Kuselan and just as you feel everything is hunky-dory the first knell of sorrow is struck.

As the screen teems with new faces it takes quite a while for the viewer to decipher that Ramakrishnan is the protagonist. He even looks a little shorter than the heroine! The uniqueness of not having a larger than life hero is 'KPKP's strength all right but director Rajamohan could have thought of a ploy to avoid the initial confusion.

Seasoned performances

The role fits Tananya like a glove — for a first-timer her performance is amazing! She

isn't the ordinary three-duet heroine that today's cinema abounds in. Her character has enough substance and she does ample justice to it.

Large, expressive eyes and a tall, lissom figure are Tananya's other assets. But at times when she laughs out loud her voice is more a wail. (Has she dubbed for the role herself?)

And who is the woman who plays her granny (Nagamma)? Like a seasoned actor she breathes life into the role! The cantankerous, crude, loud-mouthed mother of the hero (Chandra) is another memorable character. Compared to these noteworthy performances, Tarun Shatriya's (who plays the villain Dharuman) essay falls short. He could have added more zing to the portrayal, but just manages to pass muster. After



Worth a watch Kunguma Poovum Konjum Puraavum

a point Ramakrishnan's constant self-pity as he drowns himself in drinks like a rustic Devadas, is too melodramatic.

Come to think of it, the story is as old as the hills. It is in treatment and direction that Rajamohan scores. And he has admirable technical support from cinematographer Siddharth, composer Yuvan Shankar Raja and editors Praveen K.L. and Srikanth. Even fight sequences have been realistically choreographed (Selva).

The unobtrusive lens that follows the story, the right tones that accentuate the effect of the stark, serious scenes and the beauty of the rocks and sea are captivating. Yuvan's background score is another major plus of 'KPKP.' The lyric, the revved up

voice of SPB and the foot-tapping beats of 'Naan Dharumanda ...' are a treat.

'KPKP's scene of action and its milieu transport you to the days of Bharatiraja's 'Kadalora Kavidhaigal.' The veteran's influence is quite evident in 'KPKP.'

In today's scenario depiction of ardent love may seem rather outdated. Living, boozing and dying for the sake of love have been showcased on screen several times. Yet for those with a penchant for serious romantic lore, the natural portrayal of all the characters, the treatment and the finale of Rajamohan's venture should prove watch-worthy.

MALATHI RANGARAJAN
Hinduonnet.com



TAMIL INDUSTRY BIDS TEARFUL FAREWELL TO Balaji

The Tamil film industry bid a tearful farewell to actor-producer K. Balaji as he was cremated on May 3.

Balaji was a versatile actor and had essayed roles of hero as well as villain. He had acted in hit films like "Padithale Mattum Podhuma" and "Bale Pandya".

Under his company Sujatha Cine Combines, Balaji had produced blockbusters like "Billa", "Needhi", "Vaazhkai", "Savaal", "Viduthalai" and "Satham".

Superstar Rajnikant along with other big names like Prabhu and Manorama paid their respects to the eminent actor-producer.

Balaji, who died on Saturday, May 2, was cremated at the Besant Nagar electric crematorium here.

Former chief minister and AIADMK head Jayalalitha air-dashed to Chennai from Coimbatore on Saturday soon after she heard of his demise.

"For me, it is a personal loss, as he was like an elder brother to me," Jayalalitha, who had starred in a few films produced by Balaji, told reporters.

Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, who is in hospital following a stomach upset and fever, also sent a wreath.

Since the sixties, all the top Hindi blockbusters like Rajesh Khanna starrer Dushman, Amitabh Bachchan's

Deewar and Namak haram were remade into Tamil by Balaji who always used top stars as his male leads like late Sivaji Ganeshan and thespians Rajnikant and Kamal Haasan.

Very few in the Tamil film industry know that Balaji was born in a prominent Tamil Brahmin (Iyengar) family and was the grandson of a very prominent colonial era advocate T. Rangachari.

Balaji wandered into films after developing a taste for acting by performing the odd school play and amateur theatre shows.

His quest for a space in showbiz led Balaji to the office of S.S. Vasam, then owner of Gemini Studios in 1951. Vasam was not very keen to work with a newcomer but gave him a minor role in Avvaiyar, in which he played Hindu god Muruga.

Even as the career was taking shape, he was hired as a manager in Narasu Studios in the southwest suburbs here.

In that capacity, he discovered his true calling in the sixties after coming in contact with top Hindi actors like Ashok Kumar, Dilip Kumar and Tamil stars Sivaji and Gemini Ganeshan and actress Savitri who advised



him to remake Hindi hits into Tamil with leading actors.

Despite being one of the most successful film producers, unlike most in showbiz, Balaji never flaunted his wealth and always spoke softly.

Survived by his daughters Suchitra and Sujatha and a son Suresh, Balaji was a sad, lonely man since the nineties after his wife Anandavalli passed away.

His daughter Suchitra is married to Malayalam superstar Mohanlal.

Balaji passed away on Saturday evening due to multiple organ and renal failure. He had been hospitalised for over a month. [IANS]

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The Board of Directors for Build Toronto today appointed the new corporation's first Chief Executive Officer.

Following a lengthy and competitive recruitment process, Canadian development executive Lorne Braithwaite was named CEO (biography attached).

"Toronto needs the skill, talent and vision that we will have in the new CEO for Build Toronto," said Mayor David Miller. "Lorne's considerable expertise in the private sector will serve the public interest of Torontonians well."

Build Toronto will engage private and public sector partners in the development of City real estate to unlock the value of the properties, stimulate the creation of desirable jobs, and regenerate neighbourhoods.

Through maximizing the development potential of real estate assets, it is anticipated that Build Toronto can generate significant employment and new revenue for the City.

"I'm excited to be part of this new corporation and by the opportunities it presents," said Braithwaite. "The City of Toronto

Build Toronto appoints first CEO, Lorne Braithwaite

has a chance to take full advantage of some of its under-utilized assets for the benefit of all Torontonians and I intend to see that happens.*

For more information visit: www.buildtoronto.ca

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in

North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government

is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

J. Lorne Braithwaite

Lorne is a highly respected Canadian real estate developer who possesses strong strategic vision and business acumen gained through public and private



company experience during a 45 year business career. Lorne began his business career in sales and merchandising with the T. Eaton Co. and as a project manager with ATCO Industries. He later joined the Oxford Development Group as a project manager for the Edmonton Centre and was promoted to Vice President and later Senior Vice President for development across Canada.

Lorne left Oxford in 1978 to purchase Cambridge Shopping Centres. Lorne led Cambridge into becoming a successful retail

developer and commercial landlord in major markets across Canada, amassing 40 enclosed regional shopping malls, until selling the company in 2002. During this period and until 2002, Lorne was also Chairman and CEO of Ethan Allen Canada.

Since 2002, in addition to consulting to what is now Ivanhoe Cambridge, Lorne has sat on a number of corporate boards and served for two years as Chairman of Majid Al Futtaim Group, the largest enclosed shopping mall group in the Middle East. In 2006, along with other partners including Oxford and Cargill, Mr. Braithwaite founded the \$500 million dollar SEACAN Realty Fund to develop hypermarket anchored enclosed community malls in China. He currently owns and operates Park Avenue Holdings Limited, a private investment holding company with a portfolio of assets in Canada.

Lorne chairs the Investment Committee for the Canada Post Pension Plan and is a director of

Bata Shoe Corporation Worldwide, and Enbridge Inc. and has been involved with corporate boards including Woodward's Department Stores, Jannock Properties Ltd. and OMERS Realty Corp.

Lorne's not-for-profit board and member involvement has included Junior Achievement, the United Way, the Shaw Festival, the Calgary Philharmonic, the International Council of Shopping Centres, the World President's Organization, the Canadian Institute of Public Real Estate Companies (CIPREC), and the Board of Governors of the Council for Canadian Unity. He is a recipient of University of Alberta Alumni Recognition Award, the University of Alberta's Wall of Fame Award and the NAIOP 2005 Award in Real Estate Excellence - Lifetime Achievement Honoree.

Lorne holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Alberta and an MBA from the University of Western Ontario.



The Rouge Valley Health System Foundation is pleased to announce that the Rouge Valley Centenary Volunteer Services has made the final payment on their \$1 million dollar pledge towards the newly-opened Birthing and Newborn Centre. This remarkable gift, completed a year ahead of schedule, made them the largest donor to the facility.

To show our deep gratitude

Thanks a million for the million!

Volunteer Services fulfills \$1,000,000 pledge

and to thank members personally, the Foundation held a celebratory luncheon on Wednesday, April 22, 2009.

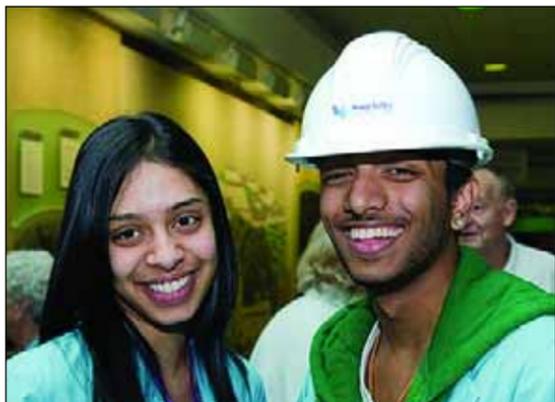
"The members of RVC Volunteer Services are invaluable to our patients, the hospital and the healthcare system in general," said Chad Hanna, Foundation President & CEO. "This kind of devotion demonstrates how a group of individuals can make such an incredible impact, transforming small change into a hos-

pital wing where babies come into the world."

Thank you, Rouge Valley Centenary Volunteer Services.

On April 22, 2009, during National Volunteer Week, the Foundation held a special thank you luncheon for RVC Volunteer Services for successfully fulfilling their monumental \$1,000,000 pledge towards the Birthing and Newborn Centre.

Photos by William Meijer and Kerry McLeish.



By: Kanyalal Raina

Few years before my migration to Canada, I read about an international conference being held jointly by the University of California and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art had at Los Angeles on Mirabhai with participants from world over. This reminded me of my grandmother who was devotee of Mirabhai and was fond of singing her devotional bhajans on various occasions. Since then I have been thinking, to study the life of Mirabhai. As revealed, the papers presented at the Los Angeles conference, it underlined international efforts to locate Mirabhai into history but Mira still transgresses it and declines to transform into a chain of dates or what are called 'the historically established events'.

From the many books that I have read since on Mirabhai particularly written by W. G. Archer: "The Loves of Krishna" and J. S. Hawley: "Saints and Virtues", I am attempting here to place Mira's bhakti and a glimpse of her life before the devotees of Lord Sri Krishna, as she experienced the change of heart which filled her with joy and peace in the life of faith and the mysteries of "inner life" and the happiness of the state of "recollection in God."

Bridal mysticism marked Mira's spiritual approach to God. Krishna, whom she endearingly called Giridhar, the Lord who upheld the mountain, was her Beloved, and she expressed the imagery of human love to delineate the agony of separation from Him and the intense desire to be united with Him.

What an irony that Mira, who during her lifetime was not only despised by her kin but even the common man's head did not bow to her, out of fear or whatever, is perhaps the most popular saint of India. As compared to three to four films attributed to other saints Mira has over ten movies made on her life. Not merely that India has a number of temples devoted to Mira, even structures earlier to Mira herself, such as the 14th century Mira Mandir at Ahad, Udaipur, Rajasthan, are renamed after her.

It is said in some legends when Mira danced, in her legs revealed her surrender to her Lord and when she sang, in her words revealed her yearning to unite with Him. Mira's bhakti towards Sri Krishna was unparalleled. "Bhakti" in Sanskrit and related languages is a general term for loving devotion, but it has also become a technical term for exclusive monotheistic devotion to a personal God to the exclusion of other paths traditionally available to Hindus, particularly jnana, or experiential knowledge. It is said once sage Narad saw Lord Narayana tormented by acute headache. A bewildered Narad asked him if he could do anything that would relieve him of pain. Narayana told him that the dust of someone's feet alone could do it. Narad could give the dust of his own feet but how

Mirabhai

The Melodious Saint



could he, a humble devotee of Narayana, do it? He went to Narayana's spouse Lakshmi but considering it a sin she too declined. Narad thought he could find someone in Brij who could give his or her feet's dust. He went to Brij, met Gopis and told them all about Narayana's pain and the remedy he sought. Not a moment of hesitation, Gopis collected a basketful dust of their feet and gave it to Narad. A sin or virtue, beyond all calculations of profit and loss the concern of Gopis was their Lord's relief - the Chaitanya's Gopi-bhava.

The fervent devotional songs in which Mira describes the crisis in her life are truly inspiring. The fervency of her love for Krishna became so great and overpowering that it allowed no intermission. It was a state of mind where- in the taste of God was so great, so pure, unblended and uninterrupted that it drew and absorbed the powers of the soul into a profound recollection, a state of confiding and affectionate rest in Krishna.

During such ecstatic state she had no sight but for her beloved Giridhara and repeatedly renewed her spiritual marriage with her Redeemer Krishna. She excluded everything, every thought of worldly existence in order to love, with greater purity and energy, her spiritual lover Krishna which consist in the complete identification of the human will, with the will of God, were burgeoning themselves within her and found expression in her devotional songs which are a heritage of Divine Love and true Devotion left behind her to the people of India.

History's strange predicament is that it has of Mira hardly anything conclusive on record, but still it cannot write her off from its pages. Mira's 'bhakti', and in this bhakti Mira discovered her ultimate strength to face whatever came her way:

'Koyi nindau koyi bindau main chalungi chal aputhi' -

"Whether condemned or lauded Mira would go the way not treaded ever before".

The pride of Mewar and Marwar, Mira's fame spread

through out India and especially in Rajasthan only by virtue of her immortal Muse that continued to shower praise of God's glory at all times, without any artificiality about her.

The dilemma of many modern scholars aft is that they seek to apply same parameters for spanning a rock which they apply for measuring water. What is appropriate in case of a king may not be so in case of a saint. One cannot determine the moment of a saint's attaining enlightenment the same way as he does the date of a prince's ascendance. Hence, more significant than choosing the kind of methodology is to determine to which kind of person one has to apply it. Mira was not a king in whose life dates, individuals, events, personal things - birth, marriage, death, or whatever, mattered much. In a king's life they do. If not the Babur's son, history would not have known Humayun. If the date of his death was not conclusively determined, the date of Akbar's ascendance, or indeed the sequence of all subsequent events in his life and indeed in the polity of the subcontinent would have muddled.

To me Mira is the moth that burnt itself in the candle of love for Giradhara and for all times filled the Temple of Devotion with fragrance. Undaunted by fire or frown, unperturbed by persecutions, this devotee of Sri Krishna sang her songs of princely renunciation and self-surrender, that shall infuse courage in the aspirant on the Path of Love. Mira lived the message she preached, scoffed at cold intellectualism and boldly proclaimed the doctrine of absolute faith in, and devotion to the Lord.

Modern Science and Art might well mock at her poetic outbursts and call those emotional effusions as mere paroxysm of a maniac or the after-effects of an "overheated" brain; I however, feel that these charges are untenable. I hold it honestly and express it emphatically that the Path to Salvation lies through love and devotion, which transcend reason and intellect. Let them, who will, try it - Mira has given the lead and

with a smile softly playing on her lips she beckons to us - let them who will follow.

Life Story of Mirabhai

Sea is a difficult subject to write on. Not a mystery it lies wide-spread before eyes, but whatever the measurement in hand, its length, width, depth, height to which its waves rise, its sublime quietude or fury, are always beyond the compass.

Mira's case is hardly different. A Rathor princess wedded to the house of Sisodias, the two earliest and the most reputed ruling dynasties of Rajputana, Mirabhai was essentially within the periphery of history, the history of our times, not of far gone days. However, with history's all parameters and research techniques applied even her parentage, husband's name, birthplace, dates, or rather years, of birth, death, matrimony could not be finally determined. Scholars, especially those trained in European methods of researching plumbing court records and those of genealogists and families of bards, are trying to discover the historical Mirabhai, a Mirabhai in 'modern historical sense' though despite such efforts, and a set of ever emerging new arguments, even now her birth swings from one date to other over a period of almost hundred years or more, from 1403 to 1506 C. E., and whatever is claimed as widely accepted is



merely a broad consensus.

Efforts at discovering this historical Mirabhai are not mean by any standards. Scholars world-over are exploring various records and interviewing people in anyway linkable to Mira; Rajasthan's royal houses are searching their stores to find their Mira-connections in mass of rags; and women of Rajasthan are re-visiting past for discovering in Mira's life the contexts that glorified Rajput womanhood.

It is entirely different with Mira. Mira would not have been any different if Rao Duda was not her grandfather, or Rao Ratan Singh, not her father, or if Kumbha was her husband, not Bhojaraj. It is not in any of them that Mira seeks her relevance.

Actually, Mira has her relevance in Mira, in her love, sufferings, devotion and complete submission to Krishna, in her power to inspire and generate confidence among those pursuing the path of truth, and above all, in her



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forbearance and unique courage in facing every moment bringing her death with a smile on face, not in individuals, material world, or even in her historicity. Nida Fazali, a known contemporary poet, in one of his widely sung verses, paid to Mira perhaps the most appropriate tribute. He perceives in Mira the strength to transform into the light of life the instruments of death - the cup filled with poison, or the deadly cross.

In a world full of lies, liars and hypocrites Mira stood for truth and gave it strength. He perceives in Mira's mad devotion such intensity that the temple's inoperative votive deity would not remain confined in the idol, but the all powerful One would come out of it and extend His bliss and divine aura into all directions. He finally prays to God to let the temple have a mad Mira once again.

History's fallacy is that in search of Mira it looks into the doors that not only threw her out but generations after generations kept washing their floors, walls and all records lest

any of her imprints are left behind. It forgets that a postal address is not Mira's home-address, and one does not reach her by knocking that door. She certainly had an abode, the soul's as well as the body's, the bones' as well as the bricks', but she lived in neither. A saint, Mira lived beyond both, the body and the bricks, and certainly not in the palatial abodes of her in-laws or even father. In the world Mira was a soul in sojourn, a traveler in a transit house, yearning to reach home where lived her Lord :

'Janyugi main nah rahungi piva bina pardesa' -

I will go, I will not stay here, and without my Lord this land is foreign.

Contd. in the next issue...



EXPERIENCE THE CHANGE: THE TRUTH & SCIENCE OF YOGA COME ALIVE IN YOGAM

Enlightened Guru Paramahansa Nithyananda to Reveal The Original Essence Of Yoga & The Key To Living Enlightenment

Yoga is the fastest growing fitness regimen in the country - with numbers reaching 11 million in the US this year. Seasoned and new practitioners of Yoga cite its benefits for a strong and healthy body, and balanced and peaceful mind. Lesser known, however, is the fact that Yoga is a 5,000-year-old science of Living Enlightenment.

"Living Enlightenment is being intense every moment and responding intuitively to achieve your limitless potential for creativity and joy," says Paramahansa Nithyananda, an Enlightened Guru from India.

Starting in May 2009, Paramahansa Nithyananda will reveal Yoga in its truest and intended form as created by Patanjali, the Father of Yoga. Following the mantra, "Experience the Change," Nithyananda's YOGAM is a new movement to understand, experience and radiate Yoga, uniting your intentions and actions to allow you to achieve excellence in performance - whether you're an athlete, executive, parent, student, teacher, professional or employee.

Speaking on the Yoga Sutras, the original text on Yoga as expounded by Patanjali, Nithyananda will share the authentic powers of Yoga - not as

just a posture or practice, but as a tool for Living Enlightenment.

Kalpataru program is a full day meditation program, and an initiation into Living Enlightenment. "Kalpataru" is the name given to a tree that fulfills your desires. The program provides you with Shakthi - the energy to change whatever you can change; Buddhi - the intelligence to accept whatever doesn't need to change; Yukti - the understanding that everything we perceive as reality is nothing but a continuous changing dream; and Bhakthi - the devotion to that which does not change. An enlightened master's energy is like the Kalpataru, awakening your innate potential to enable you to fulfill your desires and offering healing.

Following the Kalpataru Program is the weekend-long Yoga Spurana Program in which participants can apply these teachings and fall in tune with their true nature, experiencing greater fitness and health, increasing productivity, bringing clarity, and leading to success in all walks of life.

The yoga world was looked at by a common man as a physical work or a sport or some where in between. Society has largely lost the knowledge that it is a way of life. The spiritual view was missing.

On the other hand the vast majority of yoga practitioners have been focusing on the postures and at best breathing aspects only. Few who attempted to go deeper have been caught in the dos and donts. It was consid-



ered that right conduct and high personal standards were pre-requisite for a Yogic practice.

Yoga Spurana program dispels misunderstandings for the seekers, yoga practitioners or experts. For a beginner it is the best introduction and initiation in to the spiritual path. It immediately brings about good health, blissful relationships and complete fulfillment in life. For a yoga practitioner it will be a window to the real meaning of yoga and shift from doing to being. For an expert it will be a revealing experience that divine conduct will happen to one who experiences the state of yoga rather than being caught in the practice simplistic routines as impediments to the experience it self.

This program provides a deep experience as well as techniques to carry home and radiate the same experience everywhere.

The following program will be

held at:

Everest Banquet Hall, 1199 Kennedy Road, Scarborough, ON. M1P 2L2

Name of Program: Free Discourses (Tamil/English)

Date & Time: May 18-22, 2009, 6:30pm-10:00pm

Name of Program: Kalpataru Darshan (Tamil)

Date & Time: May 23, 2009, 8:00AM - 8:00 PM

The following program will be held at:

Sri Gurumandalam Siddhargal Thiru Maaligai Ashram

610 Coronation Drive, Scarborough, ON M1E 4V8

Name of the Program: YOGA SPURANA PROGRAM (English)

Date & Time: May 24-25, 2009, 7:00AM- 11:00PM

Name of the Program: Healers Initiation (English/Tamil)

Date & Time: May 26, 2009, 8:00am onwards

For more info on YOGAM and Yoga-related programs, please visit www.yogam4you.org.

About Paramahansa Nithyananda

Paramahansa Nithyananda is an Enlightened Guru from India who is on a mission to re-establish the science of inner bliss in every individual. He offers guaranteed solutions for issues as common as daily worries and stresses to those as profound as enlightenment. His authenticity, broad appeal, sense of humor and ability to make the Vedic wisdom both practical and enjoyable have allowed his teachings to reach far and wide, crossing all societal, cultural, language, age and gen-

der barriers.

Nithyananda is currently the most-watched guru on YouTube with almost 500,000 channel views. Life Bliss Foundation, the non-profit organization he founded in 2005, is a part of a worldwide movement with more than 1,200 centers. Nithyananda has given presentations and workshops at Microsoft, AT&T, PepsiCo, Oracle Corporation, Qualcomm, Petrobras Corporation (Brazil), and ITT (India).

About Life Bliss Foundation

The Life Bliss Foundation is part of a worldwide movement for meditation and healing that aims to raise individual consciousness, and ultimately, to significantly raise the collective consciousness of humanity. To achieve this, the Nithyananda Mission aspires to initiate 100 million people into the unique meditation technique, Nithya Dhyaan, and for 100,000 individuals to "live enlightenment."

Paramahansa Nithyananda, Founder, says, "Living Enlightenment is being intense every moment and responding intuitively to achieve your limitless potential for creativity and joy." Our meditations and spiritual programs help one to tap into this potential and experience Eternal Bliss, Nithyananda.

For more information, please call Mahiliny Thapendran @ 416-559-6561, mahiliny@gmail.com or visit www.yogam4you.org,

2009 Green Toronto Awards winners announced

Mayor David Miller, Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone and actor and environmentalist Ed Begley Jr. announced the winners of the 2009 Green Toronto Awards at the Direct Energy Centre on the Green Living Show Main Stage during end of April 2009.

The Green Toronto Awards, the result of a partnership between the City of Toronto and Green Living, recognize the individuals, organizations and companies that are helping lead the way to a greener Toronto.

The 10 winners, selected from among the largest number of nominations ever received by the City, were awarded a prestigious Green Toronto Award and \$5,000 to donate to a registered charity of their choice.

"We celebrate you for your leadership and the difference you are making right here and right now in Toronto," Mayor Miller said to the Green Toronto Award winners and finalists. "And we celebrate you because who you are as leaders, and what you have accomplished, paves the way for an even greener Toronto tomorrow.

Your leadership makes it possible for other individuals, organizations and companies across the city to see new possibilities for themselves as they look to take action to green our homes, communities and workplaces."

And the winners are . . .

Roscoe Handford for her work to transform the neglected Wychwood TTC repair barns into Artscape Wychwood Barns, an eco-friendly paradise: Community Projects Award, sponsored by Loblaw Companies Limited.

Enbridge Gas Distribution for building an innovative hybrid fuel cell plant that produces near zero-emission electricity: Energy Conservation Award, sponsored by Ontario Power Authority.

Green Thumbs Growing Kids for making ecological food production part of the inner city school day for children: Environmental Awareness Award, sponsored by Toronto Hydro.

The Now House Project Inc. for its near zero-energy retrofit of a wartime home and goal to inspire the retrofit of a million

similar homes across Canada: Green Design Award, sponsored by Enbridge Gas Distribution.

Mahogany Management for its green roof on a supportive housing building for tenants suffering from a history of mental illness: Green Roof Award, sponsored by Stantec.

Enermodal Engineering for designing buildings that reduce energy use and waste and for its role in LEED certification: Leadership Award, supported by Toronto Community Foundation.

Deborah Doncaster for her work that culminated in the development of the Green Energy Act: Market Transformation Award, sponsored by Green Living.

Campbell Company of Canada for its water recovery program, which saves millions of litres of water each month: Water Efficiency Award, sponsored by Toronto Water.

Kipling C.I.'s EcoTeam for engaging students and the broader community in initiatives which meet the needs of the community, in several languages: Youth Award, sponsored by TD Friends

of the Environment.

Toronto Food Policy Council for its work to foster partnerships and promote food as a critical environmental issue: Bob Hunter Environmental Achievement Award.

Winning videos from the GreenSceneZ Toronto Youth Video Challenge premiered at the awards ceremony. Through the challenge - the result of a partnership between the City, Planet in Focus, the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board - six teams of students in grades 7 through 12 won the opportunity to turn their ideas about what it means to live green into 30-second videos.

For more information about the Green Toronto Awards winners and finalists, visit www.toronto.ca/greentorontoawards.

For more information on the Green Living Show, please visit www.greenlivingonline.com.

For more information about GreenSceneZ Toronto, please visit www.livegreentoronto.ca.



Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. 2009 marks the 175th anniversary of Toronto's incorporation as a city. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

India Looks Ahead to Economic Recovery

By Anjana Pasricha

In India, optimism is growing about the prospect of an economic recovery following a slowdown triggered by the global financial crisis.

The tone is still cautious, but six months after the Indian economy registered a sharp slowdown, Indian industry says the worst may be over.

Most industries expect revival

Anjan Roy is an economist at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. He says a recent business confidence survey shows that most industries expect to see a revival toward the end of the year.

"Maybe now is a phase of bottoming out of the slowdown in India, and even if we don't see an immediate upsurge the drifting down will stop, and in sometime maybe we can see some improvement," he said.

India was less affected than many other emerging economies by the global economic crisis. But Asia's third largest economy, which had been growing at over nine percent, saw growth slip to an estimated

6.5 percent in the last fiscal year. Manufacturing and exports took a hit, consumer spending slowed sharply, and jobs were lost.

Stimulus packages making impact

However three stimulus packages, cuts in interest rates and taxes, and higher spending on infrastructure by the government are beginning to make an impact.

Economists say sectors such as steel, automobiles and cement - a key gauge of economic health - are already faring better than expected. India is one of the few countries in the world where steel consumption is rising. Demand for trucks and buses has begun to climb. Sale of consumer goods in rural India, where two thirds of the country live, has continued to grow, and a good monsoon could fuel more spending.

Stock markets are already reflecting the optimism. India's benchmark Sensex share index is at a six-month high, and has gained nearly 40 percent since March.

Government officials have said recently that India will be among



People look at a Tata Motors' Nano car displayed at showroom in Mumbai, 01 Apr 2009

the first countries to rebound from the global crisis. They say this is partly because India's economy is not as dependent on exports as many other Asian countries, and is driven largely by domestic demand.

Slower recovery for export industries

However, economist Anjan Roy says it may still take time for export related industries to turn the corner.

"One cannot expect that the export sectors can improve very radically because that will depend to a very large extent on the recovery of the international markets. Export sector will re-

main sluggish. That is a major challenge," Roy said.

There are other concerns. Analysts caution that the emergence of a weak coalition government after general elections, which end in mid-May, will dampen confidence and could slow down the prospect of an early economic recovery. [voa news]

Independent Candidates Rising in India Politics



VOA photo - R. Thibodeaux

By Raymond Thibodeaux

There has been a huge increase in the number independent candidates, mostly ordinary citizens, vying for seats in India's parliament this election, a sign of growing frustration with the country's two biggest parties.

Many of Mumbai's politicians seek out votes in slums like these, home to about 70 percent of the city's 14 million people. Residents at this South Mumbai slum say they have seen an unusually high number of candidates passing through here, asking for their support.

At least 19 candidates, many of them

from new independent parties, are vying for South Mumbai's seat in India's parliament this election. That is nearly three times the number of contenders for the seat during the last election.

Mona Shah is one of them, an eye surgeon who turned to politics. She leads the newly formed Professionals Party of India. "New parties are important in India today because the existing, traditional parties are so steeped in corruption that people need to see the hope that will lead the country forward. And that is one of the main reasons that new parties like ours have been floated with clearly defined objectives for the people, not for ourselves," she said.

Analysts say the rise of so many independent candidates like Shah is a sign of growing public frustration with the nation's two main parties, the ruling Congress Party led alliance and the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, or BJP. Citizens have formed watchdog groups aimed at rooting out corrupt politicians. Others have formed their own political parties, fielding their own candidates.

It also shows that public fury over last year's deadly Mumbai siege, known here at the 26/11 attacks, has morphed into a surge in political activism among ordinary citizens not only in Mumbai, but across the country.

"The 26/11 [attacks] perhaps has been the last straw where a lot of us thought that something definitely needs to be done. We have given enough opportunities and chances to the existing traditional parties to make a difference and that has not happened. So now we find ourselves taking charge," said Shah.

In the first phase of Indian elections earlier this month, half of the 947 candidates vying for parliamentary seats were from independent parties. There are more than 5,000 candidates, many of them independent, running for the 545 seats in India's parliament.

In other parts of the country, independent candidates from a colorful range of backgrounds have taken their first steps in the political arena. Among them are doctors, bankers, Bollywood stars, cricket players and dancers.

A political analyst for the Delhi-based Foundation for Pluralism and Inclusion, Azim Khan, says candidates run for a wide variety of reasons. "There are some reasons for the rise of independent candidates who are contesting elections this time. Sometimes, a very popular leader is not in a position to get a ticket from a recognized political party. There are other things as well. In some cases, it is caste," he said.

Some independent candidates say campaigning is dangerous in some parts of the country where politics are dominated by either Congress or BJP. Campaign volunteers for independent candidates have

been harassed and threatened by supporters from more established parties.

As some leaders of the country's major parties make dramatic election-rally entrances aboard whirling helicopters, independent candidates knock on doors, talk to small groups of people, and hand out campaign leaflets, a more grass-roots approach to politics.

And not everyone is encouraged by the proliferation of independents running for office. India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called them "spoilers."

Others say a vote cast for an independent candidate is a vote wasted. Khan disagrees. He says that India's democracy is probably safer in the hands of independent candidates and candidates from hundreds of India's smaller, regional parties. "They feel more responsibility toward their constituency than their political party," he said.

That is, unlike many of the politicians from the bigger, more established parties who, he says, often are more loyal to the party than to the voters who put them in office.

But neither of the two main parties is likely to win a clear parliamentary majority, forcing them to lure winning candidates of regional and independent parties like Shah's, sometimes with cash bonuses and political favors.

But Shah and many other independent candidates have vowed that, if elected, they would not hand over their constituency to the highest bidder. [voa news]

Some Reflections on Human Suffering

By: Devadas Chelvam

The horrendous image of the Tamils of Vanni in Sri Lanka, being massacred in hundreds daily, haunted me day and night. There are pictures of parents crying in anguish, with the dead or wounded children on their laps; young women are said to be raped and left to languish in sorrow and shame. Before long many thousands would be wounded or dead. What did the Tamils do to face such a tragedy?

It was quite dark before dawn, when I went to my meditation room, and poured out my heart to God. Laying all the responsibility and blame on Him for the terrible plight of the Tamils, I vented my anger and sadness on God freely. How could He be so cruel? How can He allow such mindless violence?

After I had expressed my feelings of anger, hurt, despair, and confusion, I was almost exhausted and silent for a while. Then certain insights flashed in my mind that left me with a sense of inner peace and a light heart. Let me share those insights with the readers here.

God is eternity. Time is infinitesimally small compared to eternity. Suffering happens in time. We cannot give much importance to suffering when we tune into

our essentially eternal nature, as children of God. We are not our bodies, but inhabit them temporarily. We can rise above the passing pain of the body and mind through non-resistance. All suffering is due to resistance.

"Resist not evil," said Christ. When we accept the pain and humiliation as necessary for our purification and spiritual growth, the result is profound peace in spite of the pain.

God is in the heart of pain. He suffers in and through us who suffer, as much as He acts in and through our enemies who inflict pain. What is the reason for this conflicting cosmic drama? The law of karma is the answer. It comes from God's love and wisdom. Without it, creation cannot evolve to its noble end of spiritual glory.

We cannot imagine the extent of God's love for us. He allows the pain only for our own welfare, purification, and growth. Our suffering is due to our past evil acts in this or former lives. Hence we have no reason to blame others or God for our suffering. We have caused it through our own acts in the past.

Pain must be felt with full awareness. The temptation to escape pain through indulgence in self-pity, blame game or other distractions should be resisted.



Concentrated awareness has healing power. Only then can our hearts open to God.

Those who realize the spiritual benefits of suffering will have no bitterness, resentment or anger towards the people who act as instruments inflicting the pain. Instead, they will pray for God's healing power to transform their enemies and bless them.

However, these insights and the sense of peace did not stay with me for too long. I reverted back to the negative feelings of frustration and bitterness, especially when I talked with others about the situation in Sri Lanka. Why?

Like most people I too live in the ignorance of God. My faith is much too weak. God seems to be unreal compared to the world to which He gives reality. Given our ignorance, are we better off than the people who have lost all their

possessions, home, land, kith and kin or their own lives?

Ignorance of our soul is the most significant loss of all. All other losses will hardly affect us, if we are aware of our soul. Christ referred to us when He asked "what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his soul?" Awareness of the soul is constant peace and joy.

Those who are truly aware of their soul or God are the saints and sages of all religions or no religion. They can easily endure any amount of pain, since they are continuously bubbling with ever new endless joy in the depth of their being. The rest of us waste our precious time in vain distractions, covering up a quiet desperation.

Someone asked Paramahansa Yogananda whether there is a place called hell. With a whimsical



smile, he replied: "where do you think you are now?" It is necessary to be aware of the hell we are in already, in order to find God.

Finding God is an unceasing uphill journey with slips and falls along the way. Though we may not feel it, we need to affirm again and again His loving Presence within us and everywhere. We cannot find God, unless we show sympathy to the suffering people and reach out to help them. The saints need not engage in external helpful acts, since they exude vibrations of peace, love and joy to the whole world in order to keep it in balance.

Human suffering is an amazing grace, if we face our pain squarely, and cry to God and for God. As the great sage Ammachi says: "God will make the devotee suffer, using egotistical people as instruments. Those who are sorrowful will call God with more concentration. In this way, God Himself will make a bridge, and by the means of that bridge He will come down." The bridge is the spiritual masters whom God has sent on earth to guide us back to Him.

Senthimani Mailvaganan

By Siva Sivapragasam

"The News..."

Read By Senthimani Mylvaganan"

Listeners of the Radio Ceylon Tamil Service almost sixty years ago would remember the above headline which echoed almost daily through their radio sets. The proud owner of this melodious voice which synchronized perfect pronunciation and clarity belonged to none other than Ms. Senthimani Mylvaganan, the popular announcer of Radio Ceylon's Tamil service. Her recent passing away marked the end of another chapter of Sri Lanka's Radio personalities who won the hearts of thousands of listeners.

Senthimani was the daughter of Mr. Ramanathan, a Media personality who had the distinction of naming one of the first Tamil Newspapers in Sri Lanka - "Thinakaran", and also functioned as its first Editor. Senthimani will also be remembered by the fact that her husband was the legendary Tamil Commercial Service Announcer Mylvaganan, and the

sister of Mrs. Ratnathikam, the Vice-Principal of Saiva Mangayar Vidyalayam, the leading school in Colombo for Hindu girls. Much credit goes to her husband Mylvaganan who was really the architect of the Tamil Commercial Service at Radio Ceylon.

Senthimani initially began her career as a teacher at Saiva Mangayar Vidyalayam and popularly known as "Ramanathan Teacher". The writer remembers her vividly when I attended this school as a toddler for my kindergarten classes. As a teacher she represented the look of a disciplinarian but always fond of her students. As years passed, her career changed and she became the first lady Tamil announcer of Radio Ceylon, working for the Tamil service. Her reading of the news coupled with the gift of her voice soon earned her a name as one of the most popular announcers. It was she who introduced Mr. Mylvaganan to Radio Ceylon and soon the two of them eventually got married and became a pair that won the hearts of thousands of Radio fans.



It was during the time of Senthimani that Radio Ceylon's Tamil service glittered as the Golden era. This was the peak period for the service which wit-

nessed many veterans over the air -S. Sivapathasunderam, K.S. Nadarajah, G.N. Balasubramaniam, S. Kunchithapatham and "Saana"



Shanmuganathan. It was also the training ground for Juniors like V. Suntharalingam, V.A. Gafoor and S. Punniamoorthy who later became professional and veteran announcers. She left the shores of Sri Lanka to settle down in England with her family and lived there until her demise recently.

Apart from her marriage to Mylvaganan which made her better known, the fact that she was the sister of an equally famous lady - Mrs. Ratnathikam, the Vice-Principal of Saiva Mangayar Vidyalayam, makes their story "A Tale of Two Sisters".

Senthimani Mylvaganan's ninety-two years of life was full of lively episodes, rich in experience with a dedicated devotion and interest in a chosen profession in which she saw complete satisfaction. It could be said that her life reflected the truism of womanhood coupled with wifedom and motherhood.



From Want to Need

(A concise history of Sri Lankan civil war)

By Kumar Punithavel

During an interview of a successful business tycoon the interviewer asked the secret of the executive's success. "Two words" the executive said, "Right decisions". The reporter probed further, "How are right decisions made?" The executive responded, "It is one word: experience." Very much impressed by the crisp response the reporter further asked, "how do you gain experience?" The executive responded "the answer for that question is once again two words" "What are they?" asked the young reporter for which the executive replied smiling "Wrong decisions"

It is true we all learn from our mistakes. Don't we all say failures are the pillars of success? Aldous Huxley in 'Texts and Pretexts' mentions "Experience is not what happens to a man: it is what a man does with what happens to him". One has to pause and find what went wrong so that next time it can be avoided, or else misery met by the mistake will be in vain.

February 2007 Sri Lanka celebrated its sixtieth anniversary of independence. Except change of name has Sri Lanka advanced in any way? Nay, they have gone behind. On 28th of February 1948 Ceylon became an independent nation in the Common wealth. Yes, you guess it correct; it was then called Ceylon, and was referred as the pearl of the Indian Ocean.

At the time of the independence Ceylon had a robust economy. The economy was depended principally on her export. Tea, for which Ceylon was justifiably famous, together with Rubber and coconut were the other major sources of wealth. There were also other sources of income like plumbago gems and few other mineral products which had a steady market. Immediately after the Second World War these exports produced enough revenue to pay for the imports of rice, flour etc.

The economy was so good there were Indian citizens from southern states illegally migrated into Ceylon in search of a brighter future. These men were of working class who came in search of jobs. They were nicknamed as 'kalla thoni'. Meaning stolen boats, as these boat people were illegal migrants who came across in boats. To day, the exodus is in the opposite direction, where Sri-Lankan is illegally going on boats to India in fear of death. India with a trade balance nearing one trillion is overtaking many developed countries of the west. What went wrong since independence of Sri-Lanka?

Ceylon is about half as big as

its last foreign ruler, the British. It was freed from subjection after centuries of foreign rule. They were first ruled by the Portuguese then followed by the Dutch, and finally by the British. Though the first two rulers had occupied for around two hundred years, when the British took power there were still two different nations living with mutual respect and good will. In 1799 Hugh Cleghorn, the first British Colonial Secretary recorded in the minutes;

"Two different nations, from a very ancient period, had divided between them the possession of the Island. First the Cinhalese (Sinhalese) inhabiting the interior of the country, in its southern and western parts, from the River Wallowe to that of Chillaw, and secondly the Malabars (Tamils), who posses the northern and eastern districts. These two nations differ entirely in their religions, language and manners..."

Till the time of invasion by the foreigners, the two nations co-existed peacefully, though there were occasional wars akin to sibling rivalry. The only time the whole country was ruled by one king was during the time of Parakramabahu I of Polonnaruwa. He united Sri Lanka around 1160 AD. The great Parakramabahu's unity did not last even 100 years.

From 1215 to 1619 there was a kingdom in Jaffna, longer than the life of Canada we live in! It was briefly annexed again by Bhuvanekabahu VI, also known as Sapumal Kumaraya, in 1450 but lost control of it by 1467.

British King George III of the House of Hanover militarily united it in 1815. That unity lasted for about 140 years under the British before starting to come apart. With the active commercial interest in Ceylon (Unified by the rulers to make it easy to administer) by the colonial masters, the centre of gravity of the Sinhalese population had shifted south and south-westward. The traditional ancient capitals of the Sinhalese like Anurathapura and Polonnaruwa were abandoned. The Tamils concentrated in the north and north eastern maritime plains. The once fertile plains were consumed by dense tropical forests. This resulted in actual physical isolation of the two main racial groups, the Sinhalese and the Tamils.

When the British gave independence to Ceylon like in the case of India and Pakistan they unified the two kingdoms in Ceylon and treated it as one country and left with a unitary form of Government. In a pluralistic society a pluralistic government would have been the logical solution which the departing rulers could not fore see.

Independent India thrived well with a federal government, but in the case of Pakistan, it split into two countries Bangladesh and Pakistan. The both halves of Pakistan have Islam as their national religion but the West Pakistan had Urdu as national language whereas Bangladesh (East Pakistan) has Bengali as their national language. They were two different races and geographically apart. As a unified country both communities bled. After separation slowly but surely both countries are thriving.

Ceylon was made into one nation by the oppressors, and the people of both nations were made to believe themselves as one peo-

ple. This is the first mistake. Yes, it is true for the oppressors they were all people of a colony. But the absolute truth is they are two distinct people joined together to drive away the common enemy the colonial masters. The ruler's effort to make them believe as one people had done great damage. As the executive mentioned earlier at the beginning of this article, the rulers should learn from the mistakes done in the past. Instead to-day the whole Island is bleeding.

largest English speaking country in the world. Unlike in duality there isn't any one group in India that will have a commanding majority over all others put together. Secondly it does have a wonderful working democratic federal government.

Only time when two races in a country prosper with the unitary form of government will be; either the Majority be magnanimous or the minority be meek. In the Sri-Lankan situation it is neither. The majority Sinhalese believed this is the promised land of theirs. Except for a very small number living abroad, Sri-Lanka is the only country Sinhalese live. They fear if the Tamils were given their

ever translated to Tamil used the name 'Thamil Arasu Katchi', meaning Tamil kingdom party where as 'Samastik Katchi' should be the Tamil translation. This kind of politicking on both sides helped further polarizing the two communities.

How ever Mr. Bandaranayake signed a pact with then Tamil moderate leader (at that time there was no Tamil militant group) Mr. Selvanayagam giving a form of autonomy to the Tamils. The Prime minister used his eloquence to defend the pact. Here too was a fatal mistake he made. As reported in Ceylon Daily News: 'The knotty problem of State had been successfully tackled by



On the night of 1st June 1981, the splendid Jaffna public library, housing 97,000 rare books and manuscripts, was burned. This act of arson was carried out, not by a bunch of nameless hooligans, but by a posse of two hundred officers of the Sri Lankan police force, taken to Jaffna by two senior Sri Lankan Cabinet Ministers (Cyril Mathew and Gamini Dissanayake), ostensibly to oversee an election. [sangam.org]

ple. This is the first mistake. Yes, it is true for the oppressors they were all people of a colony. But the absolute truth is they are two distinct people joined together to drive away the common enemy the colonial masters. The ruler's effort to make them believe as one people had done great damage. As the executive mentioned earlier at the beginning of this article, the rulers should learn from the mistakes done in the past. Instead to-day the whole Island is bleeding.

In the case of India, the unified country with a federal government is thriving by bounds and leaps. This diverse country has 325 spoken languages, and 1,652 dialects. The country has 18 official languages (Sri-Lanka is unable to have two) and 29 states with 5 union territories. Having so many spoken languages ensures that no one language or race can dominate over the others. The founder of Modern independent India Mahatma Gandhi's mother tongue was Gujarati. It is the

legitimate aspirations they will loose that country too. So Mr. Solomon Ridgeway Dias Bandaranayake contested on the platform to make Sinhalese as the official Language and won the election in 1956. At that time English was the official language and only about five percent of Ceylonese knew English. The United Election front led by Bandaranayake was given massive support by an ad hoc organization of over 12,000 Buddhist monks who came out of their temples and hermitages to canvass openly against the Sir John Kotelawala regime which they claimed was influenced by the Christians.

Being a shrewd Politician Mr. Bandaranayake in the English version of United front squared his conscience by writing in a clause providing for the 'reasonable use of Tamil' but this was conspicuously absent in the more significant Sinhalese version. It must also be pointed out that the Federal Party of the Tamils when

invoking the principles and tents of Buddhism. 'The Middle Path, Maddyama Prathipadawa', has been my magic wand and I shall always stick by this principle' he said. By this act he legitimized the political decision using religion. Of course the ultimate custodians of the religion (the Buddhist monks) felt otherwise, and who can challenge the monster which is already out. On the morning of 9th April 1958, about 200 Bhikkus (Buddhist priests) and about 300 followers gathered agitating to repeal the pact in front of the Prime ministers residence. After all who is Mr. Bandaranayake to give the meaning of the Buddhist tenant

'Maddyama Prathipadawa'? On that day at 4.15 P.M the B-C pact was torn into pathetic shreds by its principal author, who now claimed that its implementation had been rendered impossible by the activities of the minority. It strangely reminds the story of wolf complaining the lamb down stream has spoilt its drinking water.

Once the ascetic monks of Buddhism came out and enjoyed the challenges of the world were not in a hurry to get back to their monasteries and pancelers. They continued to linger in politics. The founder of the Buddhist philosophy Lord Buddha proclaimed that the cause of all suffering (Dukka) is desire (thanha). The desire of the ascetics to make Buddhism and Sinhalese as the only official Religion and Language has caused them so much suffering they have joined in the political mire pool by forming a political party 'Jathika Hela Urumaya' and gone into the parliament. This is a separate discussion on theological analysis of Buddhist philosophy.

With the advent of the clergy beating the war drum there was intense growth of race egotism among the majority found its fullest scope in the development of hatred towards the Tamils. In no period of Ceylon's history has been such epidemic of hatred perversity, by the churning up of jealousy, greed, hatred and mutual suspicion. This fire of hate was further fanned by the chauvinistic politicians of both sides. In this galloping competition of hurtfulness, on the slope of a bottomless pit, none in this nation dared to stop or slow down.

As mentioned earlier, the majority Sinhalese couldn't develop enough compassion to allow the minority Tamils to pursue their dreams and aspiration. They decided to fright the minority Tamils to make them become meek. The repeated attack on the minority Tamils by the majority Sinhalese orchestrated by the majority politicians in 1956, 1958, 1961, 1974, 1977 and 1983 are ample proof of the intentions of the majority political leaders. One should not be misled to believe that there is peace for the last twenty years. In the last twenty four years there is an armed civil struggle is taking place. It is futile to continue making mistakes and not learning from it. On the 1983 incident of violence The International Commission of Jurists Review declared in December 1983 -

"Under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, acts of murder committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such are considered as acts of genocide. The evidence points clearly to the conclusion that the violence of the Sinhalese rioters on the Tamils (in July/August 1983) amounted to acts of genocide."

It was in 1983 Sri-Lankan Tamil people came to Canada on a boat. They fled for their life and got asylum where ever they could get.

The politicians of the majority never learnt from the mistakes of terrorizing the minority doesn't lead to peace, nor improve either community's life. It is the majority community politicians that cornered the Tamils to take up arms. University Teachers for Human Rights, a much-respected independent human rights organization which frequently strongly criticizes the Tamil militants for their misdeeds very boldly and very frankly on their report dated 3rd August 2007 on page 6 has mentioned;

' Any notion that the sovereignty of the state must be preserved through massacring and chasing minorities from their homes to create special zones is to deny them their birth right to their environment and renders them aliens who must seek their own protection. Such attitudes necessarily founded on violence and invite spiralling violence.'

As observed in the report the Tamils were given only two choices; Either They cave in and live as second class citizen in their own country devoid of any aspirations or dreams, or take up arms and fight back. The desire was to struggle, and there were many groups that came out to fight back against repeated pogroms and atrocities by the thugs who were orchestrated by the politicians. By the carpet bombing of the area occupied by the freedom fighters, I would not call them terrorist as they never targeted civilians; it does not care for the innocent lives lost. Will ever Canada bomb Quebec if some militant agitators for freedom holed in that province? By doing carpet bombing they view the civilians living there as foes and need to be perished and that land destroyed. The moral responsibility to the formation of these armed groups rests solely on the political leaders of the different ineffective Sri Lankan Governments.

What is the result of these efforts of the politicians of the majority in trying to subdue the desires of the minority? First it erased what ever faith minority had in the majority's intention of appreciating their just desires. Secondly it made the majority to fear the Tamils and refuse granting of any reasonable freedom. Last but not least this communal rift has ruined the economy of the country to shambles. When I trav-

elled out of Sri Lanka 1979 fourteen rupees was equivalent to an American dollar. Today it is plummeted to one hundred and twenty rupees to a dollar. Except for a few politicians' families whose sons and daughters are in politics the rest of the county, both Sinhalese and Tamils are choking in poverty.

Though the politicians of Sri Lanka failed to learn from their mistakes, there was a great leader of another country who gained by the experience of repeated failures. The eighty three year old founder primer and present minister mentor of Singapore at a recent interview with The International Herald Tribune observed;

The basis of a nation just was not there. But the advantage we had was that we became independent late. In 1965, we had 20 years of examples of failed states. So, we knew what to avoid - racial conflict, linguistic strife, and religious conflict. We saw Ceylon.

The Singaporeans were smart enough to learn from the mistakes made by Sri Lankan politicians but not the Sri Lankan politicians.

To-day there is anarchy in Sri Lanka. Abductions and murder is a common feature. Both Sinhalese and Tamils are living in fear of death. Under the backdrop of unruliness it may be possible for the present government to put down the armed agitation of the LTTE with the air power, but it will not rid of the cause of the problem. To-day it is not a case of Tamils want freedom but they need freedom. When there is a need some one will rise from the ashes of the dead. If the present government manages to put down LTTE, then from their ashes of the dead will raise other militant groups fighting to get their need fulfilled. Sri Lankan politicians have made many mistakes in the past by resorting to violence, and taken the country to very low ebb. One should not loose sight that the arms struggle is in response to the repeated thugery by successive governments. Come what may the politicians do not seem to learn the lesson from history.

With the loss of mutual trust it is futile to expect that the two races can exist in a unitary form of government. Had there been more magnanimity in the majority or meekness in the minority the two races might have merged as a hybrid producing a homogeneous society. The opportunity for this to happen is totally lost, by the actions of the selfish

politicians. Even if the Tamils learn to speak Sinhalese language they will continue to retain their identity and this will bring discrimination. A snail will continue to be a snail even if it sheds its shell. To day many Tamils and Sinhalese who have migrated out of fear from motherland Sri Lanka have children who cannot speak their mother tongue, but they are still Tamils and Sinhalese by race. Thus there will be two races and there is bound to discrimination. The agitation armed or otherwise is only the symptoms of this unfair treatment of one race. The need to be free to seek their destiny for the Tamils is there.

Lord Buddha has said the cause of suffering is desire, and the solution is to rid of desire. The cause of the problem in Sri-Lanka is the prevention of, and denying the aspirations and dreams of a race which is its legitimate right. Unless this is recognized and rectified such struggles cannot be prevented. The only out come of the present situation is a few politicians and their cronies are becoming richer and richer. Both Sinhalese and Tamil masses are undergoing untold suffering.

In order that the two races to be in harmony they must go back to the state they were when the foreigners came in. As British Colonial secretary Hume Cleghorn correctly pointed out in 1799, there are two nations. This has to be recognized. The two races must have their own autonomy so that they could achieve



their goals and ambitions. Immediately after the Second World War there was bitter enmity between Germany and France, but as they continued as two distinct races they were able to resolve their differences and live in peace.

It is meaningless for the majority to shed crocodile tears that the Tamils cannot survive on their own. If Tamils fail as a nation let it be called their karma. It is important that the Sinhalese people be educated that a federal form of Government is not partition of the country. When the unity cannot be achieved by unitary form of government, it is best to sacrifice the unitary government and form a federal government and find unity. Canada and India are wonderful examples of such countries. How many more mistakes the politicians are to be permitted, before they become smart enough to learn the lesson and turn the tide?

Remember it is not a want but the need the two nations live apart so that they can resolve their differences and form a workable union. Will they?

Kumar Punithavel

To reach Kumar Punithavel write to kumarpunithavel@yahoo.com

A powerful photo!

CNN may not have shown this photo. TV reporters are too busy focusing on the Queen receiving the VIP guests at Buckingham Palace. This was a "touching" Kodak moment outside 10 Downing Street that won't be forgotten by this London cop. Remember the cops on duty are not supposed to shake hands, but the two brothers couldn't resist the historic moment. The black cop never imagined in his wildest dream that he would usher a black American President into the British corridors of power. Nice!



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Muktipath Meditation - a path towards utter freedom - XIII

No One is Like You

Prof. Saran Ghai

"There are six hundred million people in this world. I am one among those but I am not just like any other person. I am what I am. I am different. Nobody equals my qualities, and nobody can because every individual is different: so am I." Keep these words in your mind and every morning when you wake up, repeat these. These words will remind you that to be special, you have to work harder than others. You have to fetch extra hours from your everyday life to do greater things.

As stated above, millions live on this earth. To be better recognized as per the geographical subdivisions we are said to be of a hemisphere or a country. We are called Americans, Canadians, Germans, French, Indians, British and so on. That is our recognition as we belong to that country. To narrow it down further, it comes to the states. We are recognized

from the state of a particular country we live in. We are New Yorkers, we are Ontarians, we are Gujaraties etc. We are also known by our cities. Someone will say - I am from Toronto, the other will say - I am from Lahore and third one would be proud of being a citizen of Moscow.

This classification does not end up there. We also want to be known ourselves by the language we speak or our mother tongue. French are proud to be using the French, Germans are proud of their German language and Punjabies are proud to be speaking Punjabi. This differentiation narrows up further by the caste or religion of the individual. The Hindus, The Christians, The Muslims, The Sikhs, further subdivided by their castes are all proud to of their language and caste.

Finally it comes to a family. A small close knit unit of blood related individuals which include a Father, a Mother and their kids. And last but not the least it is the

individual who is known by his name. Name is the first recognition of an individual.

But it is not your name that makes you special as thousands others may have the same name. It is your achievements in the life that make you special. You have to do something extraordinary, something very special which a common person would not do. That does not mean that to be special you have to have your name in the guinness book of world records. It means that your deeds should have a meaningful and good impact on others life. You got to do something which is good for the society, humanity and the world.

Whatever you do in your day to day life, if you do with full sincerity and dedication, you are doing special as mostly the common people do not do even that much. They would find shortcuts, confiscate application of energy or would play hide and seek with their job.



To be better and from better to the best and unique, you got to develop such qualities within yourself that the world starts recognizing you as a special individual. You got to be important, a celebrity automatically you will be. Once you become a celebrity, you are above the common crowds.

That is what you want to be.

A person, very special who can claim with proud - No one is like me.

- Continued...

-Prof. Saran Ghai

Ph: (416)816-5559, Blog: saranghai.blogspot.com, E-mail: ghaisaran@gmail.com, website: www.muktipathmeditation.com.

(Prof. Saran Ghai is an Author, Editor and Publisher of a number of Books, Magazines and Newspapers. He is a Palm Reader and a Numerologist too. To book appointment to know about your present and future, Love, Marriage, Business and other problems, make an appointment on phone.

Prof. Ghai publishes a 2-in-1 English-Hindi monthly magazine titled "Superior Star" & "Soubhagya" (Good Fortune) covering Meditation, Wellness, Naturopathy, Yoga, Palmistry, Astrology, Numerology, Astronomy, Reiki and many other alike subjects. To Subscribe Superior & "Soubhagya" just for \$20 per year, please e-mail - superiormonthly@yahoo.ca.

A WOMAN ON A MISSION...NORMA MCLEAN

After taking vacations in several countries, I thoroughly enjoyed the time spent, but on returning home, never felt fulfilled. There was always an empty feeling inside me that I should be doing some kind of charitable work to help all those less- fortunate whom I had encountered.

In 2007 I was able to join with a group headed for Kenya. This was a group organized and led by the Rev. Kim Beard of St. Paul's Church On-The-Hill in Pickering. I worked with the eye-care clinic, which was one of several clinics set up.

It was a truly profound and eye-opening experience (no pun intended), to see the difference we were able to make in the life of an individual who might not have been able to see, or even to afford a pair of glasses. We were told it would cost a month's salary for them to afford one pair of glasses. After having had such a rewarding experience, it is my intention to pursue mission work to the best of my ability.



Twins Victoria and Bryan with Norma McLean

This July in 2009, a similar team will visit Lima/Peru, led by our fearless leader Rev. Kim Beard. Dr Lorna D'Souza will head up the eye care team for the second time and eight others including myself, will be working alongside. We hope to distribute more than 4, 000 pairs of prescription and reading glasses to the people in need and provide them with funds to pay for cataract surgery.

Two of the students here at Trillium School, where I work, decided to conduct a very unusual fundraiser for the mission.

Brian and Victoria Lee decided, of their own accord, that for their birthday, they would have a party and in lieu of gifts, would accept cash donations for the Mission to Peru. They brought in an amazing \$625.00, which will be used to purchase much needed items for our work in Lima.

It's great to see our students taking the initiative and hope they will encourage other young people to reach out and help others in need. A big thank you to Victoria and Bryan. Happy Birthday!

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Hanuman Jayanti

On Thursday April 9th 2009, the first full moon day of Chaitra-April equinox -the birthday of ONE who is revered and considered GOD a superman since millenniums by all across Hindu culture ...Hanuman Jayanti was celebrated for 5 days at Mississauga's Shri Ram Mandir with traditional devotion and fervour lead by Pandit Roopnauth Sharma the spiritual leader, assisted by a well knitted harmonious Kirtan Mandli backed by our musicians and singers through out these 5 days.



A large number of devotees of Bhagwan Hanuman, kept a constant stream of visitors through the temple complex on all these 5 days on regular intervals, and whole heartedly participated in the Hanuman Jayanti celebration on 9th April.

There are so many legend stories of faith about Bhagwan Hanuman that one reads in ancient books and also sees now on NET and on TV serials .We respect HIS act of faith that has made our own eulogise the super hero of the past and who still resides within and around all of us.

Bhagwan Hanuman acted and overcame super human obstacles, completed herculean tasks he was asked to do by sheer faith in his "deity "Rama and inner and physical strengths, HE was naturally endowed with..It needed only a reminder from Rama or a need to do the job for the welfare of the most that HANUMAN came forward to accept the challenges that NO body else could. He did complete the job given to him in the fight between Dharma lawful existence and Adharma perpetrated by likes of Ravana (a Brahmin learned and powerful Chieftain) then.

This month as we celebrate birthday of a original superman --HANUMAN -full of immense strength of knowledge and physique with faithful timely guided right actions for benefit of the humanity, we continue to be inspired by his unique acceptance

as a GOD by all Hindus in all the nooks and corners of the vast and 'varied looking' world.

As you hear recitation of Hanuman Chalisa or understand the various meanings of so many eulogising names HE has been called, you would understand his true significance THEN.

Bhagwan Hanuman has been pictured-captured in- fixed in, various IMAGES according to the wisdom faith and imagery of love by various artists of brush and sculptors ..but for me he is more than that above all the limitations imposed by these bound images of faith and love for him by so many..

Bhagwan Hanuman is a picture of a great superman and I bow to all those who follow the great Bhagwan Hanuman as HE acted and have potential to act on behalf of us all and successfully accomplishes super human efforts that benefit the society. My reverence to super hero THE HANUMAN MARUTA ...and his incarnates today and also in advance to those waiting in times to come to evolve into a "Va Naara hero" who acts accepting super human challenges overcoming un-surmountable looking obstacles for benefit of civilisation. .Jai Veer Hanuman Jai Siya Var Ram.

It is said Bhagwan Hanuman Ji, possesses ocean-like unfathomable knowledge and virtue, incomparable might and earth-

like steadfastness, is known and worshipped primarily as the redeemer in crisis, and those who chant this Chaleesa with devotion get His blessings:

Bhagwan Hanuman, the redeemer, is more widely worshipped and has a larger number of shrines dedicated to him than even Lord Rama, his master. Hanuman's power to redeem is not a mere theological conceptualization or a believer's hypothesis, his life, as it reveals in different sources, is its example. In Rama-katha - story of Rama's life, which is broadly also the story of Hanuman's life, this emissary and servant of Rama often rises above his master at least in the face of a crisis. In theology or tradition of devotion, no God of any pantheon in India or else where in the world is venerated so much for redeeming in crisis as Bhagwan Hanuman by Hindus. As occasions of misfortune outnumber those of happiness in life, mankind looks more to him who redeems from misfortune rather than him who bestows happiness.

'Jaya Hanuman jnana guna sagara, jaya Kapisha tinhu loka ujagara,

Ramaduta, atulita baladhama, Anjaniputra, Pawanasuta nama.'

Victory to thee, O Hanuman, thou art the ocean of knowledge and virtue. Victory to thee O Lord of Monkeys, thou art known in all three worlds. O Emissary of

Rama, thou art the home of unparalleled might; Anjaniputra - Anjani's son, and Pawanasuta - son of the wind god, art thy names.

'Ko nahi janat hai jaga mein Kapi Sankata-mochana nama tinharo' -

Who does not know in the world, O Monkey-god, redeemer in crisis is thy name. And, the laudation is least exaggerated. Whatever Rama's attributes as the supreme God or Vishnu's incarnation, when broken hearted he wandered in search of Sita, Hanuman came to his aid.

He not only pledged to this cause himself, Kishkindha's monkey king Sugriva, his entire army and ministers, and discovered Sita but also initiated efforts for her recovery by waging a psychological war against Ravana. He put Lanka into flames leaving Lankans panicky, and brought to Rama's fold Ravana's brother Vibhishana without whose aid Rama's victory over Ravana would not be so easy.

When struck by the 'shakti' - divine weapon of Meghanatha, Ravana's eldest son, Lakshmana swooned and helpless Rama only wailed, Hanuman not only brought Ravana's personal physician Susena competent to cure Lakshmana along with his house but also the mountain Dron from the Himalayas with Sanjivini on it, and Lakshmana's life was saved. He rescued Rama and Lakshmana from Ahiravana's custody almost when Ahiravana was going to behead them for sacrifice. Bharata had pledged to end his life by immolating himself if Rama did not return to Ayodhya before sun-set on the day his fourteen years of exile ended. Rama was delayed, but before Bharata entered the pyre in full flames and immolated himself Hanuman rushed to Ayodhya, assured him that Rama would reach there in minutes and therefore saved Bharata's life.

Lord Rama himself narrated Hanuman's glorious deeds, but more notably, he recalled him specifically for redeeming him and his brother from crisis. When Ahiravana asked Rama and Lakshmana, before beheading



them, to commemorate anyone they held in reverence, Rama asked Lakshmana to invoke Hanuman who alone could rescue them.

The Protector

This redeemer of scripts is the protector of common folk. He is invoked by common masses also for redeeming them but more often to protect them from everything untoward. His images are installed and worshipped invariably as the protector and patron deity having power to ward off misfortune. He is Kherapati, the patron deity of 'khera' - village, and Ghatoria, the protector of 'ghats' - valleys, to include river-crossings, descents, ascents, forts and village boundaries. As Balaji, he keeps evil spirits and maladies away and exorcises ghosts and ills from within. His name by itself has the status of the 'mantra' - hymn, which, being commemorated, dispels evil, evil spirits, ghosts: 'Bhuta pishacha nikata nahin abein' - ghosts and evil spirits dare not come around. As Bajaranga - with body made of 'vajra', or Bajrangabali - having 'vajra'-like strength, he presides over gymnasiums and wrestlers' rings infusing into wrestlers' bodies his own might, and in the bodies of gymnasts and acrobats, his own agility and swiftness.

It is only Hanuman who wards off adverse influence of planets like Saturn and Rahu, protects from business failures, failure in examinations, politics, sports and other fields. In a strange fusion of the machine and the faith, which reveals when a road-roller, truck, locomotive engine, or a ship, painted with an icon of Hanuman or simply his name, passes across in many parts of India, Hanuman is believed to avert mishap at sea, rail-track and roads, and protect machine and treasures it contains.

Kanayalal Raina

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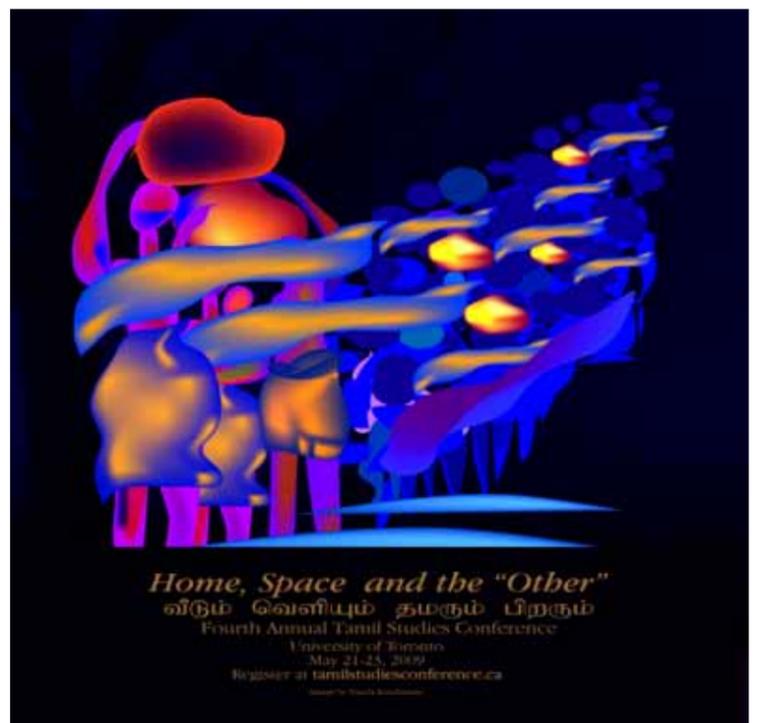
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Winner for April 2009

Color Me Competition - 14

Nitin Hari Babu

Scarborough

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Dead Line for entries:

May 25, 2009

Entries have to be made on original paper, photo copies not accepted.

The Winner will be selected and posted in the June issue.

Please mail to:

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Please Note:

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Only one winner will be

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Color me Competition - 15



Entry Form: May 2009

Name:

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LIGHTS CAMERA - YOUTH IN ACTION

Contributed by:
Abizar Badani

Imagination these days is finding fewer buyers in cinema these days ---may it be any part of the globe, Hollywood or Bollywood, its all the same, and sequels are considered a safer bets -- I find my self being drawn a whole new cinema for stimulating stories and brain tonic.

One of the few to catch my eye is PEACE LIFE STRUGGLE produced and directed by the youth of Toronto under a program called Youth in Action --- about how the youth

have come out to talk on some of the most important issues this generation has to face, may that be peer pressure or just coping up with daily day to day struggles, a film that makes you think that these minds have so much to deal with and is there a voice there that can support them in anyway.

Personally, I think we all should have to be pretty crusty or then just have a bad day to object to these issues which in some way or the other knit the fabric of our future---So I decided to meet up with this wonderful team of film makers, Alysha, Joseph, Piramila, who have worked hard to bring out their first movie only

to direct our thoughts to what they say is where youth are often misunderstood, and truly I can say this effort has been a fruitful journey.

Just meeting them bought me to realize that today its these films that need a wider audience, as most of our top line banners have almost lost the sheer compassion of fun family movies or even movies that you can take a part of home ---- It was after a screening of PEACE LIFE STRUGGLE at the FOX THEATER; I sat with Alysha Joseph and Piramila to speak to them about how this film was made and what they took home from it , "I think what makes PEACE LIFE STUGGLE so interesting is that the film seems to represent the worst of what people think about teens; yet on another level the film symbolizes the best of the teens--as dutiful youth, and loyal friends" explains Alysha, Joseph and Pramila as the continue to talk about various struggles they encountered as young film makers, may it be screenwriting or editing or then just getting people to talk in front of the camera.

PEACE LIFE STRUGGLE is a great film---a character study of interesting and complex youth who have at times walked the thin ice and yet at times have given so

much to the fabric of our lives. Each interview and event in the films speaks volumes of what the youth have contributed. The film is available in a single-disc edition. Even if you're not a Documentary type, PEACE LIFE STRUGGLE is a great soul film, and one of the MUST OWN titles.

For more information on this feature email us at: n_issac@hotmail.com





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X

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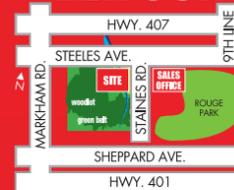
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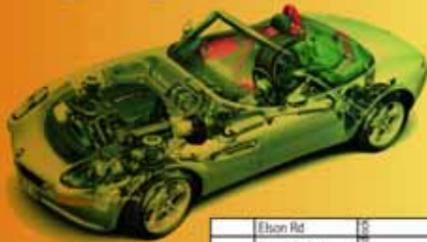
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