

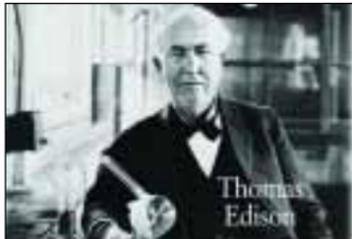
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# Monsoon Journal

A parfait media publication

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## World Leaders in Toronto for G20 Summit this Month

**By Siva Sivapragasam**

Toronto will play host to several world leaders including U.S. President Barack Obama, British Prime Minister David Cameron and French President Nicolas Sarkozy at the forthcoming G20 Summit to be held on June 26&27 (Saturday & Sunday) at the Metro Convention Center. Heads of State from Russia, Japan, Italy and Germany are also expected to attend the meeting. The G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation and this year's theme will be "Recovery and New Beginnings".

World leaders will focus on building healthier, stronger and more sustainable global economy. Toronto is considered as a world

class city and ideally suited for an event of this nature. Toronto's tourism, business, culture, diversity and environmental leadership will be in world spotlight and lasting international relationships are expected to be developed.

The summit is expected to generate economic and tourism benefits for businesses and residents of Toronto. Leaders, delegates, Media and civil society groups are expected to pour into Toronto hotels and restaurants and shops. Security will be high and intensive during the summit.

**(More details of the G20 Summit on Page 48)**

**Pics Clockwise: Barack Obama, Stephen Harper, David Cameron, Nicholas Sarkozy**



### Stars pullout of Bollywood event in Sri Lanka

The International Indian Film Academy event in Colombo began with much lower than the anticipated fanfare as several leading stars of Bollywood stayed away from the Jun 3- 5 event, adhering to boycott calls arising from Tamil activists and the South Indian movie industry.

The Wall Street Journal has called the 'IIFA Colombo function not so filmy.'

The absence of leading stars and related events has prompted several Indian media to provide previously

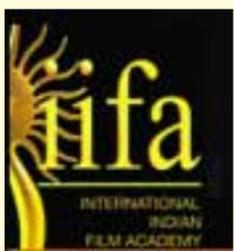
unseen in-depth coverage to Tamils' plight in Sri Lanka during the days leading up to the IIFA event. The Indian media is seen widely reporting on Tamil civilian deaths, continuing human rights violations and the conduct of the final stages of the Sri Lanka onslaught last year in the predominantly Tamil provinces.

Activists in Tamil Nadu state in Southern India have been campaigning for a boycott of the Colombo - Sri Lanka IIFA event ever since the venue was announced in April. Tamil

Nadu activists say that the IIFA event is geared towards 'image building' of Sri Lanka government that is under criticism and scrutiny for alleged war crimes and human rights violations.

Officials of South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce (SIFCC), who met Bollywood's key members in Mumbai on June 2nd, said films featuring the stars and technicians who participate in the IIFA event in Colombo would not be screened in South India.

L. Suresh, head of the South



Indian Film Chamber of Commerce, said the call for a boycott was "about humanitarianism not politics". He said: "You can't have people performing over freshly dug graves. We are not in the era of Genghis Khan."

The 2011 IIFA is slated to be held in Toronto.

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## From the Publisher's Desk ... Getting in the spirit of summer

The temperature is on an upswing and along with it is the spirit and energy of people running around trying to take care of the busy lives that come with the summer season. Trying to manage work and/or school, family, extracurricular activities and just trying to enjoy the few months of summer that we have waited for all year long is a lot to handle. Being able to deal with this all may take a lot of work, but will certainly be worth while in the end, especially trying to catch the beautiful Canadian summer weather that we so rarely have the opportunity to see and enjoy.

June not only brings the beginning of summer, but a special day honouring fathers for their special role in the family and society. Father's day takes place on the third Sunday of June, and this year falls

on Sunday June 20, 2010. Fathers are not always given the credit they deserve because for one reason or another lose their respect. But if you have a father that would risk their life for you like mine and sacrifice all that he has without ever asking for anything in return, then this day and all year long should be celebrated and recognized as one for the special fathers out there. I would like to wish all those exceptional fathers that truly define what a father represents a very happy and joyful father's day!

The end of June also brings school to a close for most students and this means parents trying to frantically organize some kind of activity for them to take part in. Something that encourages the youth to stay active and continue to develop their skills even in the sum-

mer should be taken account of. Keeping in mind that not everyone can afford to send their child to a summer camp or a day camp, and may not be able to stay at home to tend to their child, however alternatives are available. These could be to find a relative that may be at home and is willing to watch over your child during the day, or to leave your child with a trusted parent that may also be taking care of their own children during the summer months. Or if your child is old enough to acquire a part-time job, volunteer or even take a summer class to keep themselves busy and out of trouble. A variety of activities are out there, but it is up to you to find one that matches your child's needs.

As June comes to an end, July brings in not only the summer heat

that most of us have been craving for, but also the only holiday that commemorates our nation as an independent country. Canada Day falls on July 1 every year and celebrates the anniversary of the July 1, 1867 enactment of the British North America Act, which allowed Canada to become an independent territory from England. Many amendments to this Act have taken place from 1867 including the Constitution Act of 1982. Canada has gone through a drastic transformation from being an obedient British colony into a progressive, successful independent nation. To all that live in this beautiful country from the West coast to the East, I wish you a marvellous Canada's Day celebrating the best country in the world!

**By: Krishni Loganathan**  
B.A. (Hons) Political Science, History

## Ajax & Pickering Rotary Clubs organize a Run for Ajax Hospital funding on June 12th. and A Rib Fest on June 4,5 & 6th

The Ajax & Pickering Rotary Clubs are organizing a Run on Saturday June 12th. to raise funds for the Ajax Hospital. The event will be a 1km, 5km and 10km run. There will be awards and medals distributed for the winners. The

first 250 pre-registered participants will receive a Technical TShirt. The event will occur at the Rotary Park on the Ajax Waterfront. There will be water stations on the run route plus washroom facilities. Picnic facili-

ties will also be available. Food served will be donated by Agropur Division Natel Ltd., Ajax Convention Centre and Jack Astor's. The event will occur at the Rotary Park on the Ajax Waterfront

The Ajax & Pickering Rotary Clubs are also scheduled to hold the third annual Ribfest on Friday June 4,5 and 6th..at the Esplanade Park which is located behind the Pickering City Hall. This will be a friendly family oriented event with lots of fun and entertainment with a refreshment tent. There will be live bands playing on these days. The Ribfest begins at noon on Friday & Saturday and ends at 11 p.m and on Sunday will end at 7.00 p.m. Admission and Parking are free. The event will serve the interests of the community.

## Business Community Leads Charity Event for Worthy Cause

SCARBOROUGH -- The business community is once again at the forefront in exhibiting the giving spirit of our community by organizing one of the pioneering annual charity events, the "CTCC Walkathon".

This year's annual Walkathon organized by the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce will be held on June 5th, 2010. The 4 km walk through major streets around Scarborough Grace Hospital will begin at 9 AM - 10 AM and a closing ceremony thereafter until 1 PM

The participants of the CTCC Walkathon strap on their running shoes in order to raise money for a very important cause while in the meantime promoting healthy exercise and lifestyle and enjoying the outdoors with a pleasant morning walk. The Walkathon supports the healthcare needs of residents in Scarborough. Since 1999, the event has raised approximately \$150,000 for Scarborough hospitals (General & Grace divisions) and Providence Healthcare.

The fundraising and volunteering spirit of the CTCC Walkathon has been recognized as one that enables everyone to gain something meaningful in addition to having great fun along

the way. Many members of the community look forward to this annual event

In this tradition, The Scarborough Rangers have joined hands as support groups in facilitating the success of this event. Corporate Sponsors Industrial Alliance, TD, and Scotiabank provide critical support to keep this fundraising event running smoothly along with many other sponsors.

CTCC's Walkathon is organized by Co-Chairs Sritharan Thurairajah, Kalyani Nathan, Santha Panchalingam, and Sinnadurai Jeyakumar. Members of the board and past chairs of the Walkathon will also be providing their support by joining this year's event. We look forward to increased support from our Members and the community at large to make this year's Walkathon even more successful.

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## Special FETNA group package - CTC

Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA) 23rd Annual Tamil Convention will be taking place on July 3-5 in Waterbury, Connecticut, USA. This year's guests include Prof. Francis Boyle, Dr. Elyn Shander, Tamil Movie Director Bharathiraja, Actors Vickram, Trisha, Santham, Music Director Harris Jeyaraj, background singers Karthik, Sadhana Sargam, and Kavignar Thamarai.

Full details: [www.fetna.org](http://www.fetna.org)

The cost of the conference will be \$75 US (for both days) plus accommodation, food and travel. To minimize the cost on travel and accommodation, a group travel is being organized by Canadian Tamil Congress. Seniors may qualify for special discount when registering through CTC.

For more information or to register, please contact Canadian Tamil Congress at 416-240-0078 / [info@canadiantamilcongress.ca](mailto:info@canadiantamilcongress.ca)

As space is limited, please reserve your space early.

# PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS TO THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON NATIONAL SECURITY

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the appointment of four new members to the Advisory Council on National Security (ACNS). The new members are Anil Kapoor, Dr. Andre Gerolymatos, Dr. Zaheer M. Lakhani, C.M., and Jacquelin Holzman. The new members will serve for a period of three years, beginning in June 2010.

"Protecting the health and safety of Canadians remains a priority for this Government. I am pleased that experts of this caliber will be part of Canada's Advisory Council on National Security," said the Prime Minister. "The advice of these experts in law, international relations, public health and safety, transportation security and other related areas will provide valuable insights that are needed to address national security challenges."

Prime Minister Harper thanked outgoing members Louis Bélanger, Marie Rounding and Anju Virmani for their service on the Council. The Prime Minister also expressed his appreciation to outgoing member and ACNS chair Norman Inkster for his dedicated service since the Council's inception.

In addition to the newly-appointed members, the Council also includes Douglas D. Baldwin, Norbert Manger, Karen Oldfield, Karim Rajwani, Beverley A. Busson, François Couillard, Anne Joynt and Neil McCrank.

Established in 2005, the ACNS provides expert advice about national security issues to the Government through the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister.

The Government is taking action on several commitments it made in the 2010 Speech from the Throne to enhance national security. These include measures to crack down on criminals; promote public health; and strengthen transportation, border and international security.

### Anil Kapoor

Anil Kapoor, of the Law Society of Upper Canada, practices criminal law, appeal and trials, and regulatory law in the area of professional discipline. He has appeared numerous times before the Supreme Court of Canada and several provincial courts of appeal. In 2006, Mr. Kapoor was appointed Commission Counsel to the Commission of Inquiry into the Investigation of the Bombing of Air India Flight 182 (Air India Public Inquiry).

### Andre Gerolymatos

Dr. Andre Gerolymatos has held the Hellenic Canadian Congress of British Columbia Chair in Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University since 1996. He specializes in military and diplomatic history and international relations. He has published several articles and books on the political and social history of modern Greece and the Balkans.



Prime Minister Hon. Stephen Harper

### Zaheer M. Lakhani

Dr. Zaheer Lakhani is a distinguished cardiologist who was awarded the Order of Canada in 2007 for his commitment to multiculturalism and international development. As a representative of the local Ismaili Muslim community, he has advocated for programs to assist in the settlement and integration of these new Canadians. He also promoted a proactive model of community policing as chair of the Edmonton Police Commission and founding president of the Canadian Association of Police Boards.

### Jacquelin Holzman

Jacquelin Holzman is a member of the governance committee of the National Capital Commission with more than 15 years experience in politics. She has held various leadership positions including chair of the Board of Directors of the Ottawa Health Research Institute since 2002. Prior to this, she served as Mayor of Ottawa from 1991-1997.

Ontario PC Leader Tim Hudak today shared details of his upcoming Newcomers Employment Opportunities Act. The act includes practical and affordable measures to help new Canadians find employment and create jobs in Ontario.

Hudak's bill would lower the investment threshold for any immigrant investor who is looking to open a business outside of the Greater Toronto Area. In addition, the bill would provide new

## Tim Hudak Announces Bill to Help New Canadians Build their Careers and Create Jobs in Ontario



tax incentives for employers who pay for English and French language training for new Canadian employees. Finally, Hudak's bill would require every Ontario regulated profession to provide potential immigrants with affordable and comprehensive access to credentialing information.

Hudak, who also serves as Ontario PC Citizenship and Immigration critic released the details of his bill after meeting with prominent business leaders from several of Ontario's multicultural communities at the Mississauga Seniors' Centre.

"I'm the grandson of immigrants myself. My grandparents came to Ontario because it represented the best opportunity to build a better life for their children and grandchildren. Now that I am in public life, I want to do my part to help other new Canadians realize their dreams right here in Ontario."

-- Ontario PC Leader Tim Hudak

"New Canadians want nothing more than to have a level playing field and a fair opportunity to



build better careers in their new home. This bill will give them more of the tools they need to succeed."

-- Roundtable Participant Gul Nawaz; Senior Partner, Nawaz, Taub & Wasserman Chartered

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If passed, Tim Hudak's Newcomers Employment Opportunities Act would do the following:

Lowers Investment requirements from \$3,000,000 to \$1,000,000 for immigrant applicants applying for permanent residence status in the investor category if the immigrant investor plans to operate a business outside of the Greater Toronto Area.

Provide a new tax credit to eligible employers who arrange for occupation specific English as a second language or French as a second language training for immigrant employees who have been in Canada for less than two years. The tax credit would be equal to 10% of the enrolled employees' wages.

Require regulated professions to make training materials and credentialing information available to prospective immigrants online while empowering the Fairness Commissioner to monitor reasonableness of Ontario professional credentialing processes compared to other jurisdictions.

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## Canadian Tamil Congress holds May Remembrance inside Canadian Parliament

Several Members of Parliament from all political parties attended a memorial inside the Canadian Parliament on May 11th 2010 to remember the tens of thousands of lives lost in Sri Lanka's war. Organized by the Canadian Tamil Congress, the memorial was held to mark the immense bloodshed that occurred in the last stages of the war and featured prayer services by priests of all faiths.

In total, more than 30 Members of Parliament and Senators attended this memorial inside Canadian Parliament. Dignitaries joined in the Red Ribbon Campaign by wearing red ribbons to remember the bloodshed. Attendees placed flowers by lights in memory of the lives lost.

At the memorial, the Canadian



Tamil Congress requested that the Government of Canada call upon the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, who will soon be arriving in Canada, to mandate a Commission of Inquiry into war crimes. "Canada must help ensure that those who violated the gravest of international crimes are held to account for their actions," said Mr. Kubes Nava from the Canadian Tamil Congress.





by David Gollust at The State Department, VOA News

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says the reconciliation commission being set up by Sri Lanka to look into the armed conflict that ended there a year ago must be seen as independent, competent and impartial. Clinton met with Sri Lankan Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris on Friday May 28th amid calls from human rights groups for an independent, international inquiry.

Secretary Clinton says she supports the Sri Lankan commission plans in principle, but is also making clear that the United States wants the panel to have a mandate broad enough to fully investigate alleged human rights abuses.

The Sri Lankan government said earlier this month it was creating a Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission to examine the final stages of the 20-year civil conflict that ended a year ago with the defeat of the

# Clinton Prods Sri Lanka on Reconciliation Commission

Tamil Tiger rebels.

International organizations have accused both sides of human-rights abuses in the last month of the bitter conflict in which several thousand civilians, mostly ethnic Tamils, were reported killed.

Clinton and her Sri Lankan counterpart discussed the commission plan and postwar recovery at a meeting here.

At a press event, Clinton said commissions of this kind have played an important role in advancing accountability and redressing wrongs in other countries emerging from civil strife.

She said the United States is supportive of the Sri Lankan approach, but wants the envisaged commission to have a broad mandate, adequate resources and members who are seen as independent, impartial and competent.

"We expect that the mandate will enable them to fully investigate serious allegations of viola-



Sri Lankan FM G.L. Peiris and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton take part in a joint news conference at the State Department in Washington, 28 May 2010 ~ State Dept Image by Michael Gross

tions, and to make public recommendations, that commission members and potential witnesses must enjoy adequate and effective protection," she said. "And the commission must be able to work with the government so that the government will give due consideration to the recommendations," said Clinton.

In advance of Friday's meeting, the group Human Rights

Watch said the Sri Lankan inquiry plans fall far short of minimum standards, and urged Secretary Clinton to endorse an independent international commission.

The Colombo government has rejected such calls. Standing alongside Clinton, Foreign Minister Peiris said the Sri Lankan panel will include people of stature and independence and will have a mandate "broad

enough to address critical issues."

But he said its focus has to be local, and appealed to the world community to give the process a chance:

"Our plea is that we be given the space to allow the commission to begin its work without impediment and without hindrance," said Peiris. "And certainly along the road, if we feel there is a need for support, then we would certainly be happy to engage in a dialogue with the United Nations to gain the benefit of the wisdom and the experience of the United Nations. But we think that at the start, the commission must be given every encouragement to set about its work, and there must be a presumption that it is going to succeed," Peiris concluded.

The Sri Lankan foreign minister said his government has lifted 70 percent of wartime emergency regulations, and that the remainder will not remain a moment longer than necessary.

He thanked the State Department for lifting a long-standing warning earlier this week advising U.S. citizens to be cautious about traveling to Sri Lanka.

## Ganeshwary Santhanam, "I'm blessed to be alive"

Reported by IRIN News

BATTICALOA, Ganeshwary Santhanam, 31, is one of thousands of women who joined the now defeated Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which fought for an independent Tamil homeland for more than 25 years

She joined the movement - branded a terrorist group by many - and left during the ceasefire, got married to another fighter and gave birth to a son, before being pressured to rejoin the LTTE in 2006. Like thousands of Sri Lankans returning to their homes today, she hopes to build a new future.

"I joined the LTTE almost 20 years ago to fight for the freedom

of the Tamils. My parents were not happy about my decision. I dropped out of school due to the war. My childhood dream had always been to become a Bharathanatya dancer, but my dream was never fulfilled.

"After serving in the movement for nearly 10 years, I left the LTTE during the ceasefire time in 2002. I got married to an LTTE cadre, and gave birth to a son. We were a happily married couple.

"But in 2006, that life of normality was to change when I was pressured to join up yet again. During that time, I was given rigorous training along with other women in the village and proved



Like many Sri Lankans returning to their homes, Ganeshwary hopes for a better future- pic by IRIN contributor

myself a better fighter than most.

"At the same time, it was very difficult because I was worried about my family. I always thought if I die who will look after my family? Memories of my family were always in my mind when I was on the battlefield. On the other hand, I did not have a choice to decide this on my own and I continued to fight. I prayed to God to save me and let me live for my husband and son. Later, my family and I would become displaced from our village. I gave birth to another son and am currently jobless, as is my husband.

"The war was terrible - so much suffering and loss. I want to educate my children and make them better citizens. I want to forget the bitter past and forgive others and lead a peaceful life.

"I have fought in the battlefield, but I managed to survive without any injury, while many of my fellow fighters died on the spot. It's a miracle of God. I am blessed to be alive."

- IRIN (Integrated Regional Information Networks) is part of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs



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# BMO Bank of Montreal Launches Banking Package for Newcomers

BMO Bank of Montreal is assisting new Canadians with the introduction of its Newcomers to Canada Program, providing new Canadians with banking products and services essential for settling in their new country. Special offers include free banking for the first year, a free small safety deposit box for one year, and a preferred GIC rate for those customers with saving and investment needs.

According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, there were nearly 250,000 immigrants to Canada in 2008. In Toronto and Vancouver alone, there were approximately 87,000 and 37,500 immigrants, respectively.

"As Canada's first bank, BMO has always made supporting newcomers a priority. We have a long and proud history of serving the financial needs of multicultural communities," said Su McVey, Vice-President, Customer Communications & Marketing, BMO Bank of Montreal.

"We are committed to helping make the transition for new



**Su McVey, Vice-President, Customer Communications & Marketing, BMO Bank of Montreal says "Welcome to Canada" with BMO's new Banking Package for Newcomers.**

Canadians as smooth as possible and believe the BMO Banking Package for Newcomers will assist with the everyday banking needs of new Canadians."

BMO has spent more than 25 years assisting new immigrants with financial advisory services and is the only Canadian bank with branches in each of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong

Kong. "At BMO, we understand moving to a new country may be stressful," said Lily Capriotti, Vice-President, Greater Toronto Area Central District, BMO Bank of Montreal. "Our community branches are staffed with multilingual employees and we offer financial solutions created specially to help newcomers achieve

## New program will include free everyday banking for one year and a preferred rate GIC

their personal and financial dreams in Canada."

BMO Bank of Montreal understands the importance of helping newcomers get established as quickly and easily as possible. New Canadians play a vital role in contributing to our economic prosperity and we share a collective responsibility to ensure their transition to Canada is smooth.

BMO's Support for New Canadians and Multicultural Communities

BMO regularly supports multicultural community events including its recent sponsorship of Dragon Ball in Toronto, TaiwanFest, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Foundation, World Partnership Walk for the Aga Khan Foundation, Iranian Day Festival, and the Diwali Festival in Vancouver

BMO is the only financial institution in Canada to establish an affinity card partnership that reaches out specifically to the Asian community through the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada (CPAC) a federally reg-



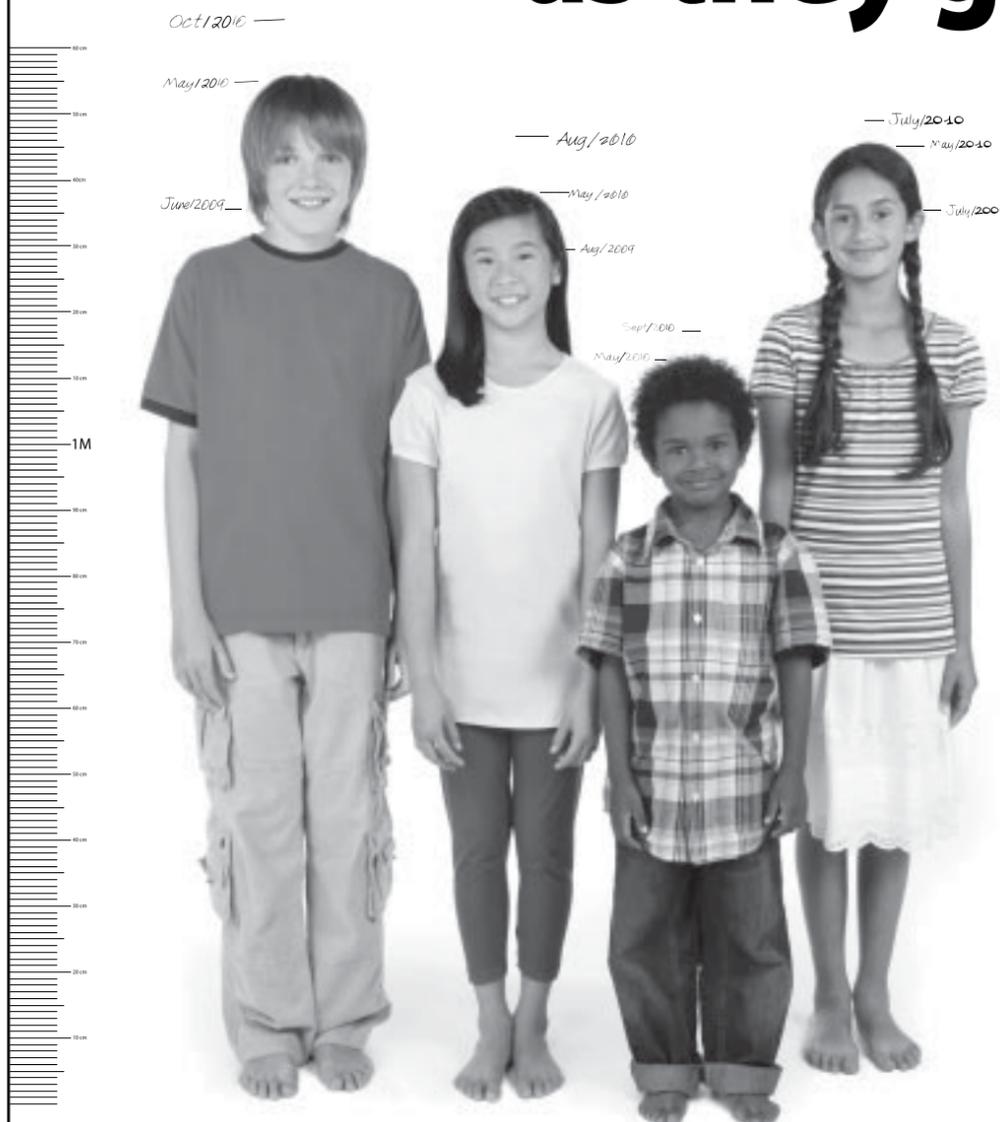
istered, not-for-profit organization which serves as an advocate for immigrant professionals of Chinese decent

BMO's workforce mirrors the diversity of the Canadian mosaic and where ever possible we try to provide services in the language of our customers' choice

BMO has Chinese, Korean and Punjabi glossaries on its website and other customer communication material is available in multiple languages

On April 28, 2010 BMO was honoured as one of the Best Employers for New Canadians for 2010 by Mediagroup Inc., publishers of Canada's Top 100 Employers. This is the second consecutive year BMO was chosen for the award. The award recognizes the nation's best employers for recent immigrants, and the interesting programs they offer to assist new Canadians making the transition to a new workplace and life in Canada.

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By: Dr. J. Douglas Salmon, Jr.

\*Adapted with permission from Multi-Health Systems & Dr. J. Douglas Salmon, Jr. from Rehabilitation Education and Coping Pamphlet Series

### What Does Stress Have to Do with My Recovery?

Many but not all people who are recovering from long term illness or injury come to recognize that stress plays a very large role in determining the severity of their symptoms from day to day, and sometimes, from moment to moment. When an individual is experiencing stress, the body triggers the "stress response." This response is also known as the "fight or flight response" because it prepares the body to either physically defend itself (fight) from the threatening situation, or else run from the situation (flight). During this experience, the body's muscles tense, the heart and breathing rates increase, the eyes dilate, and often the person may perspire or tremble, all in preparation for dealing with the stressful situation.

Early on in the evolution of humans, this response was most appropriate to help the individual to ward off predators and other physical threats. In our modern world, where stresses tend to be more financial, social, and interpersonal, the fight or flight response may create more of a problem than a solution. The reason for this is that the stress response produces a series of chemical reactions in the body that become easily burned off when used for quick activation of energy and strength. However, when not quickly used, these chemical reactions may become unhealthy to the body, especially if they are allowed to build up over time.

When a person becomes injured or ill for a long period of time, two things occur that reduce his or her ability to cope with stress. First, often the individual will either stop or reduce involvement in activities such as exercise, sports, and recreational and leisure activities that typically help to burn off that excess stress related fuel, and that generally help to keep the body and mind in good shape. Second, the person may experience an increase in (or at least a different kind of) stress related to his or her condition including: anxiety about their recovery, financial insecurity, worry about his or her job avail-

# Stress and Support Systems in Recovery



ability, increased conflict in the family, fear of pain/symptoms, embarrassment about the condition, etc.

As a result of the increased demands and decreased stress reducing outlets which often accompany illness/injury, many people will subsequently become more vulnerable to the effects of stress. Increased muscle tension for instance, can aggravate injury/illness, and when compounded by stress, may also make the person vulnerable to milder illness such as colds and flu. Taken together, the added demands on the body with less coping abilities, will typically slow the recovery from the person's main condition.

### Personal and Other Resources to Cope With Stress

In many respects, the things that influence a poor or good recovery from injury are similar to factors determining how one handles other stresses in life. Generally, a stressor is defined as any demand on the individual. A person's ability to cope with that demand depends upon certain resources that they possess such as a positive attitude, physical outlets, stress management, relaxation skills, past experiences, techniques to "blow off steam", and, among other factors, the degree to which the person is physically and emotionally fit and healthy. But aside from your personal skills, knowledge, and attitudes toward dealing with stress, the people around you may act as either a help or hindrance to recovery. In other words, people around you may act as a buffer deflecting the full impact of the stress before it gets to you, and/or by helping you to cope with stress by listening to you and encouraging you to keep a posi-

tive attitude when your mood is down.

The greater your social network or buffer, the less impact stress will have on you, which will likely improve your rate of recovery. Research on this social network buffer theory has now clearly demonstrated among clients, including those with cancer, that the greater one's social network, the better the chances of one's health and well-being. It is no wonder then that so many support groups from Alcoholics Anonymous to chronic pain and cancer groups have been so widely sought out and complemented for the benefits they provide.

### What a Social Network Buffer Can Do For You

*Good social relationships...*

" Decrease stress through positive support and friendship

" Decrease stress by lessening conflict in your life

" Allow you to talk about problems giving you a different perspective on a problem, and giving rise to a variety of solutions

(through other's opinions)

" Can keep you laughing and encourage you not to take life too seriously

" Can help keep your thoughts positive when you are down

" Can allow you to delegate some responsibilities, easing your burden

" Can help to distract you from your symptoms and worrying

" Makes you feel better about yourself

It is important to recognize that all social networks are not created equally and that some, depending upon their nature, may do more harm than good. For example, a social network that is focused on drinking alcohol, using street drugs, or that is generally mean-spirited as opposed to supportive, is likely to get in the way of, rather than help, your recovery.

*What You Can Do for You*

" Keep a positive attitude

" Exercise regularly to help relieve muscle tension and nervous energy

" Keep your mind actively involved in activities to avoid stress caused by worry

" Practice formal meditation or relaxation techniques

" Eat nutritious meals

" Adopt personal strategies. Try writing poetry, keeping a journal, painting, listening to music, take up an old pastime, or begin a new one

Evaluate your life. Often people with prolonged recoveries have become dissatisfied with their lives because of ongoing dislike for things in which they were involved (e.g., work, friends, neighborhood), or lacked positive relationships, accomplishments, variety in life, or hobbies). When life's not working to your satisfaction, something needs to change. Look at options by discussing the matter with supportive people or seek a professional for counseling. Weigh the pros and cons of your options, and then move forward, shifting your strategy until you find the right fit.

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# Population projections: Canada, the provinces and territories 2009 to 2036

All growth scenarios considered, Canada's population could exceed 40 million by 2036. The ageing of the population is projected to accelerate rapidly, as the entire baby boom generation turns 65 during this period. The number of senior citizens could more than double, outnumbering children for the first time.

From 2009 to 2036, Canada's population could grow from 33.7 million to between 40.1 million under the low growth scenario and 47.7 million under the high growth scenario.

Results at the provincial and territorial levels vary according to the scenario considered, mainly due to differences in interprovincial migration patterns. Overall, regardless of the scenario, growth would be higher than the national average in Ontario and British Columbia. The population of every province and territory would increase during this time, except in some scenarios in the case of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Canada's population would age rapidly until 2031, by which time the entire baby boom generation would have turned 65. It would continue ageing after 2031, but at a less rapid pace.

By 2036, the number of sen-



iors is projected to reach between 9.9 million and 10.9 million, more than double the level of 4.7 million in 2009. They would surpass the number of children aged 14 or under for the first time ever between 2015 and 2021, depending on the scenario.

By 2036, the median age of the population would range between 42 and 45 years, compared with the current median of 39.5.

### Contributors to demographic growth

Canada's population growth depends on two factors: natural increase (births minus deaths), and net international migration (immigrants minus emigrants).

The number of deaths is projected to increase during the entire period between 2009 and 2036, as the baby boom generation gets older. Under the medium-growth scenario, natural increase would remain positive

until 2036, although the levels of births and deaths would get closer over time.

Regardless of the scenario, immigration levels would represent a larger share of the projected population growth at the national level. Because large numbers of new immigrants consist of younger individuals in the child-bearing age, sustained levels of immigration would also have a positive impact on the number of births.

According to the medium-growth scenario, Canada would receive roughly 333,600 immigrants a year by 2036, compared with 252,500 in 2010.

### Age structure of the population

Projections show that seniors would account for between 23% and 25% of the total population by 2036, nearly double the 13.9% in 2009. Higher immigration levels would do little to change the forthcoming ageing of the Canadian population.

At the same time, the proportion of the working-age population aged 15 to 64 would decline steadily from about 70% to about 60%.

Provincial and territorial projections

Ontario and British Columbia

are the only provinces in which average annual growth would exceed the growth rate for Canada as a whole between 2009 and 2036, according to all scenarios.

Ontario's population would increase from nearly 13.1 million in 2009 to between 16.1 million and 19.4 million in 2036, depending on the scenario. Under the medium-growth scenario, it would account for 40.5% of the national population in 2036, up from 38.7% in 2009.

The population of British Columbia would increase from nearly 4.5 million in 2009 to between 5.8 million and 7.1 million in 2036. Under the medium-growth scenario, its share of Canada's total population would rise from 13.2% to 14.5%.



Quebec would remain the second most populous province. Its population would rise from 7.8 million in 2009 to between 8.6 million and 10.0 million in 2036.

Under the lowest-growth scenario, Newfoundland and Labrador's population would decline from 508,900 in 2009 to 483,400 in 2036. Under the highest-growth scenario, it would rise to 544,500.

You can find more details at: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/100526/dq100526b-eng.htm>

## Obituary

### Mrs Thavamalar Sivananthan

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# Seniors' Month to strengthen the virtue of Filial Piety

(Toronto) June marks the Seniors' Month where seniors are celebrated all across the four Yee Hong Centres. Spring Into Wellness, Centenarian & Nonagenarian Club celebration, Dumpling sales and Golden Ray Award Ceremony are the highlights to show our support and appreciation for the many contributions the seniors has made to the community.

## Golden Ray Award Tribute Dinner (June 17)

Mrs. Helen Lu, the "Queen of Volunteers", well known for wearing her trademark running shoes by volunteering at malls and knocking on doors, will be presented the inaugural Golden Ray Award by Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation for her tremendous contributions to the community and to the work of Yee Hong.

"From just a concept to becoming one of the largest non-profit senior care providers in this province, Yee Hong has been fortunate to have Helen at every step along the way," says Dr. Joseph Wong, Founder and Chair of Yee Hong Foundation and Co-Chair of the 2010 Golden Ray Award. "Until this day, Helen remains a tireless fundraiser for Yee Hong and an ardent advocate for healthy and dignified living for seniors. I am proud of her."

Affectionately known as "MaMa Lu", Helen has been a

champion of many charitable causes since she emigrated from Taiwan more than 30 years ago. Among her many worthy endeavors, she is a member of the Board of Directors of Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation and a founding director of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Greater Toronto's Chinese Canadian Council. Notably, she is always in the forefront raising relief funds for numerous disasters around the world. Helen has been widely recognized for her community contributions by all three levels of government. In 2004, Helen was appointed as a member in the Order of Ontario.

Golden Ray Award Tribute Dinner, co-chaired by Dr. Joseph Wong, Nancy Siew, John Man and Hugo Lam, will take place on Thursday, June 17 at Regal Chinese Cuisine & Banquet Hall, 1571 Sandhurst Circle, Unit 107, Scarborough, ON M1V 1V2 (McCowan Road and Finch Avenue). Dinner and festivities will begin at 6:30pm and the award presentation will start at 8:30pm. Tickets are limited and the prices are: \$60 (regular) and \$100 (patron). The net proceeds will go to Yee Hong Foundation. For tickets and enquiries, please contact Katherine Hui at (416)321-0777 ext.1812.

## Spring Into Wellness (June 5 and 12)

In addition to the award pres-

entation to a long-time volunteer, Spring Into Wellness to take place on June 5th at Yee Hong Centre - Mississauga and on June 12th at Yee Hong Centre - Scarborough-Finch is another festivities to celebrate the Seniors' Month. There will be Fundraising Walk, Ping Pong Contest, Karaoke Sing-a-thon, Cooking Contest by bring a home-made dish and performances that everyone will enjoy.

"Spring Into Wellness is one of Yee Hong's grassroots event in support of seniors, says Henry Chiu, Yee Hong Development and Communications Director. "We want to create a fundraising event for the entire family to get active and healthy. While having fun they would be supporting a good cause. The event is a truly meaningful family activity as pledges raised will go toward programs and services for our seniors."

## Yee Hong Centenarian & Nonagenarian Club

Yee Hong Centenarian & Nonagenarian Club is a place where we celebrate longevity and honour our seniors. Thanks to the exemplary and above-standard care provided by Yee Hong, more than 35% of our 805 nursing home residents are over 90 years old. During the whole month in June, celebrations will be held for our club members in four centres. Those honoured will receive congratulatory greetings from politicians and souvenirs from Yee Hong.

## Bridlewood Mall Dumpling (June 11-13)

In celebration of the Dragon Boat Festival, traditional Chinese dumplings, sticky rice wrapped in bamboo leaves, will be sold at Bridlewood Mall on June 11-13. All proceeds go to Yee Hong.

## About Yee Hong

Yee Hong is a caring community where seniors enjoy a continuum of culturally and linguistically appropriate care. With a client-centred and personalized approach, Yee Hong is currently serving 15,000 seniors and their families across the GTA through its 805 long-term care beds, senior housing, community-based programs, medical and rehab services. Many of the programs and its current standard of service delivery are not funded by the government. In order to sustain our level of care delivery and many community based programs, Yee Hong Community Wellness Foundation needs to raise \$2.5 million each year.



Helen Lu (2nd from right), the Queen of Volunteers celebrated birthday for Mrs. Yuk-Fong Ng, a 102-year-young Yee Hong resident today and took pictures with Dr. Joseph Wong (3rd from right), Yee Hong Foundation Chair, Florence Wong (2nd from left), Yee Hong Centre CEO and Mrs. Ng's family.



Helen Lu (front row, middle), the Queen of Volunteers will be presented the Golden Ray Award. She celebrated birthday for Mrs. Yuk-Fong Ng, a 102-year-young Yee Hong resident today and officiated the opening ceremony of Seniors' Month with Dr. Joseph Wong (front row, 2nd from left), Yee Hong Foundation Chair and her friends.



Helen Lu (middle), the Queen of Volunteers will be presented the Golden Ray Award. She took pictures with the 4 co-chairs of the Organizing Committee. From Left: John Man, Dr. Joseph Wong, Helen Lu, Nancy Siew and Hugo Lam

# JUNE 18-20

## SUNSET BEACH PARK

OAK RIDGES

# fair

The Annual Oak Ridges Fair will be held Friday, June 18 to Sunday June 20, 2010. Rain or shine at Sunset Beach Park, Richmond Hill (Bayview Ave. and North Lake Road, at Lake Wilcox). Free Admission.

**Fri June 18 6pm - 10pm, Sat June 19 10am - 10pm & Sun June 20 11am - 6pm**

The event will feature midway rides, artists and entertainment, bands, a large screen movie in the park, a Bavarian (beer) garden, prizes, classic cars, local vendors, tons of wings, clowns, magic acts, big fire trucks, ponies, petting zoo, reptiles and something for all ages.

Friday night is The Joe Schepis Band followed by the movie "Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs". Bands will run Saturday from 4-10pm and will feature Central Nervous System and headlining ska-punk band "The Johnstones". Sunday afternoon check out the Muskoka Wildlife Presentation and Scisnakes, stay for the interactive session to get up close with the reptiles.

To become a fair vendor, volunteer, promote your business by being a sponsor, or get more information, please contact:

Phone: 905.773.3122 email: sherry@oakridgesfair.com \*All events and activities subject to change.



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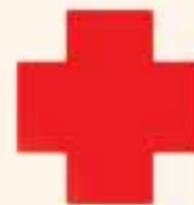
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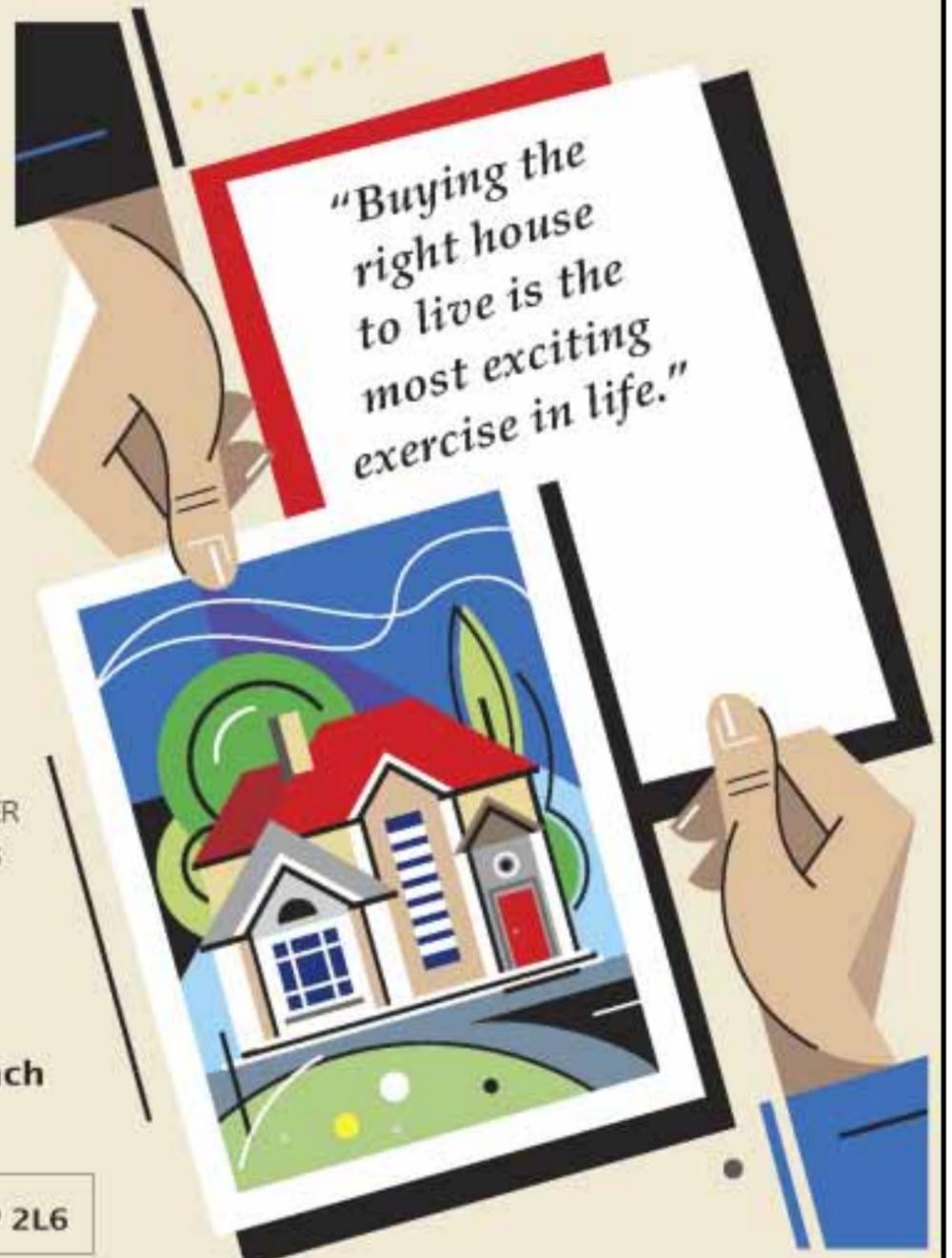
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# Sri Lanka's Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) is a little too late

By Col. R. Hariharan

President Mahinda Rajapaksa has appointed the much awaited 'Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission' (LLRC). The Island newspaper in its editorial 'Some V-day thoughts' voiced the pertinent question, "Why should we expend our time and energy to reinvent the wheel?"

The appointment of the commission had been in incubation for nearly a year. Actually Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative in the UN had spoken about his government initiating a mechanism for fact finding and reconciliation at the UN Security Council Interactive Briefing in June 2009. And after taking so long, why did President Rajapaksa choose the 'Victory Day' eve to appoint the commission?

Apparently, Sri Lanka after trying other methods to ward off the flak at the UN on the issue of Sri Lanka's human rights violations during the war for more than a year has adopted the face saving way of appointing the LLRC. Things came to a boil when the UN Secretary General Ban ki-Moon persisted with his proposal to appointment a panel of experts to look at the issue. Of course, Sri Lanka had tried all means including a botched attempt at getting the NAM representatives to pass a resolution against the UN Secretary General's move. Significantly, India -Sri Lanka's closest ally in the sub continent - did not vote for Sri Lanka at the NAM representatives meeting. Did Sri Lanka take a hint? I do not think so.

Since it went to war Sri Lanka government had tied itself in knots over issues of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. This had been cause of great concern to civil society both at home and abroad. The state of emergency and the Prevention of Terrorism Act energized during the war came down heavily on any criticism of the government. The sentencing of veteran journalist and columnist J.S. Tissainayagam, sentenced to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment under the anti-terror law was a typical act that put Sri Lanka in the black book of global media. The case attracted so much attention that even the U.S. President Barack Obama had expressed his concern about it.

The adverse international reaction became worse when the issue of war crimes, particularly as allegations of death of thousands of civilians in the closing

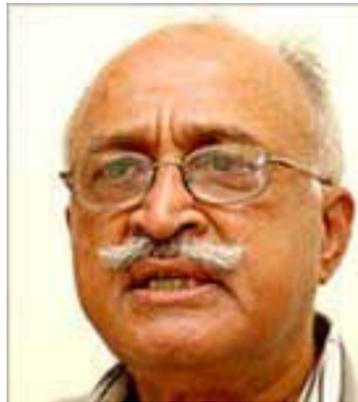
stages of war due to army shelling, gathered more mass. The voices at the UN became more strident and critical of Sri Lanka. And Ban ki-Moon's move was the culmination of these rumblings in Sri Lanka.

Logically, immediately after the victorious war with the elimination of the Tamil Tigers leadership, Sri Lanka should have unshackled all the restrictions imposed during the war. That would have partly met the just demands of civil society; it would have had the advantage of improving the credibility levels of Sri Lanka. But it has not happened so far.

However, it appears President Rajapaksa is trying to tackle this issue by taking small measures to reduce the pressure at a time of his choosing. Tissainayagam was released on bail on the eve of the recent elections. And after the return of the President from the SAARC Summit at Thimphu, early this month the newly appointed Minister of External Affairs Prof GL Peiris announced the President had pardoned the journalist. Did his talks with the Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh during the Summit influence the decision? To be charitable to India, we can think so. If we look at the timing of the appointment of the LLRC it would appear to be so as coincidentally India's Secretary for External Affairs Ms Nirupama Rao had touched upon the fringe of issues in Sri Lanka that are of concern to India.

If local and international political expediency was behind the appointment of the Commission, it is a little too late as the issues have been ignored for over a year and the critics have gained considerable mileage. In any case, a UN official in New York has clarified that it was not going to stop Ban ki-Moon from appointing an expert panel. According to a media report, the UN official said President Rajapaksa's commission and the UN Chief's expert panel were two different concepts due to which Ban Ki Moon would not reconsider appointing his panel. And the UN Secretary General would send his Under Secretary General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe to Sri Lanka as soon as clearance is given by the government there.

The UN official's observations appear correct if we look at the terms of reference of the Commission given in media reports. These are to examine and report on the following aspects:



Col. R. Hariharan

(a) The facts and circumstances which led to the failure of the ceasefire agreement and the sequence of events that followed thereafter up to May 19 2009

(b) Whether any person, group, or institutions directly or indirectly bear responsibility in this regard.

(c) Lessons learnt from these events in order to ensure that there will be no recurrence.

The wording of the terms of reference is vague and general, rather than specific and pointed. So even if the commission completes its job, it provides sufficient room for endless legal quibbling to delay any action. They will be subject to interpretation whether they cover major issues of civil society concern.

The International Crisis Group has just come out with a detailed report on the war crimes committed by the armed forces and the LTTE. Channel 4 has kindled the fire of war crimes with more inputs. And General Fonseka had brought parliamentary focus on the issue of war crimes. Sri Lanka has to face these issues and take action. International donors who had been supporting Sri Lanka are already weary of its attitude. According to the UN, the country has received only 24% of the total

funds (\$ 337 million) required for continuing the humanitarian operations. So the appointment of the LLRC is not going to quell strident voices against Sri Lanka. Nor is it going to improve Sri Lanka's international credibility.

The Commissioners appointed under provisions of Section 2 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act (Chapter 393) has eight prominent personalities as members including at least three with Foreign Service background. Among them is HMGS Palihakkara, former foreign secretary, considered a man of high integrity.

But the issue here is not much as what the LLRC does or finds, but whether its efforts would produce useful results to increase the credibility of the President and the government. After all there had been many commissions in the past which had faced endless obstacles and delaying tactics from the administration. So we can expect the LLRC to make only limping progress in the coming years as every point is debated.

Such squabbling is not unknown. Statutory commissions like the Election Commission, Public Service Commission, Police Commission, Human Rights Commission and the Bribery and Corruption Commission have suffered as appointments to them were mired in political controversy. This has literally ground them to halt and the President is likely to propose amendment to the constitution to enable him to go ahead with the appointment of chairmen and members of these commissions.

Sri Lanka government should ponder over the Island's original question: "Why should we expend



our time and energy to reinvent the wheel?" The newspaper has justified its question aptly:

"Lessons that all of us have already learnt and have yet to learn from thirty years of fighting are fairly well known. Some of them are: no community can or must try to suppress another; violence does not pay; this country does not belong to any particular community; all communities belong to it; it is too small to be divided among different communities but certainly large enough for all communities to live in peacefully."

What has been happening in Sri Lanka brings to mind what Arthur Miller said in *The Crucible*: "a political party is equated with moral right, and opposition to it with diabolical malevolence. Once such an equation is effectively made, society becomes a congerie of plots and counterplots, and the main role of government changes from that of the arbiter to that of the scourge of God."

Time is an irredeemable resource and Sri Lanka has already wasted over 20 precious years in debating what was obvious. Why waste time on more meaningless commissions? It is time to get on with positive action, now that the war is over. And to get going Sri Lanka needs an attitudinal change. That is the lesson number one to be learnt.

*(Col R Hariharan, a retired Military Intelligence specialist on South Asia, served with the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka as Head of Intelligence. He is associated with the Chennai Centre for China Studies and the South Asia Analysis Group)*

## Ontario Sri Lankan Pensioners Association Open House Meeting On June 27, 2010 at 9.00 a.m. at Scarborough Civic Centre

The Ontario Sri Lankan Pensioners Association (OSPA) will be hosting an Open House Meeting of all Pensioners and Widows' & Orphans Pensioners (W&O.P) Pensioner, both for members and non-members alike on June 27, 2010 commencing from 9.00 a.m. at the Council Hall of the Scarborough Civic Centre situated at the Scarborough Town Centre to discuss and hear the views and problems the pensioners are facing consequent to the issue of Pension Circular No:16/2009 dated 25.9.2009 issued by the Director General of Pensions.

There will be two Sessions of this Meeting. The first between 9.00 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. to discuss and hear the views of all pensioners and consider what action is to be taken in this regard. The second Session will be from 10.30 to 12.00 for all members registered earlier as well as those who may be enrolling at this meeting. The main Agenda is to consider and adopt the Constitution; to elect an Assistant Secretary and an Assistant Treasurer and the appointment of Honorary Auditor and the Advisor by the General body and any other business.

Annual Membership fees for enrolment is \$15.00 and \$100.00 for Life Membership. Enrolment Forms will be available at the Meeting. Those wishing to enrol are required to bring with them the pension numbers for completing the forms.

As this a very important meeting to consider the views and problems all pensioners are facing and to decide what steps we should take to remedy the situation consequent to the Pension Circular, all pensioners are kindly requested to attend.

The OSPA had communicated with the Director General of Pensions. He had recognized our Association, agreed to amend the circular and also agreed to meet the members. But the Association had not been notified as to when he would meet us.

Should any further information be required, pensioners are requested to contact either the President Mr. M. Velauthapillai (Tel: (905) 471-9042 or (905) 294-4038) or the Hon. Secretary Mr. Maya Kandiah (Tel: (416) 291-6667)



By Shan Sundaram

From May 17th to 19th, 2010, Tamil elected representatives from UK, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, France and Denmark Norway and Sweden came to Philadelphia, the historical land mark of USA for its independent in 1776 - for the first assembly of the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) with an illuminating message to the world that the democratic and political phase of Tamil people is well and alive.

Participating as the elected representative for the State of New Jersey at the Inaugural Sessions of the TGTE was a solemn, emotional experience that also enthralled the sense of Tamil pride and hope above all.

The hope which shone like the sun through morning mist on that bright spring day in Philadelphia - that our resilience is rising along, especially with the younger generation of Tamils - elected as representatives and being very much involved in the progress of TGTE.

Representatives of all ages have been elected, some of them not born in Sri Lanka. Among them are well educated profes-

# The torch carrying young ambassadors of the TGTE

sionals, such as Attorneys, human rights activists, business people, scholars and philosophers representing all walks of life. They only believe in democratic and transparent approach, the very tool known to them in aspiring and pursuing their goals.

Everyone conducted the affairs with a great understanding and friendliness at the Inaugural Session of the TGTE. The prevailing sense is that all is about collective thought and finding solution for the Tamils.

The next generation representatives of TGTE particularly the young roving ambassadors - are activists having a rapport with their elected political leaders, civil society and well wishers of Tamils around the globe whilst setting a firm foot in their professional aspirations. They are bright and motivated.

Their awakening in the aftermath of Tamil genocide, the war crimes leveled on Tamils and continued denial of basic rights and livelihood of their brethren in Sri Lanka has given them this mantle to inspire others as well in the spirit of serving on TGTE. They understand the difference



between Sri Lanka's continued propagandist of hoodwinking the world and real situation of Tamil people of Sri Lanka. They are aware of Tamil people's inability to express their suffering, grief, fears, mercy, denial of law and order, fear of getting killed for someone else's misconduct and being a subject of collective punishment in an environment seeing the 'absence of war' but still without 'peace'.

They are like the first generation of Jewish people who woke up amidst World War II to stand against the genocide of their people. Now shedding light on the slow and rolling genocide of

Tamils and bringing justice is the cry they pledged in Philadelphia.

The hope and inspiration that everyone summed up when bidding farewell to the Inaugural Session are many but primary of them, is that the torch has been passed to this new Tamil generation and they are marching forward toward freeing their people.

They say that the world is beginning to knock their doors in order to help the suffering Tamils in Sri Lanka. These are democratically elected army of young ambassadors who are tireless in seeking accountability from the world for the actions related to the onslaught of Tamils in Sri

Lanka.

They are about solutions, willing to walk the walk and not just talk. Perhaps the world would have a chance as well to take an inspiration or two from this group, the offspring of a society largely detached from their social fabric and disseminated trans-nationally since the July 1983 pogrom of Tamils.

(Shan Sundaram, TGTE member representing The State of New Jersey is a graduate of Rutgers University, NJ. As an artist, he paints as a hobby and his paintings can be viewed on [www.free-tamil.com](http://www.free-tamil.com) and [www.sundaram-art.com](http://www.sundaram-art.com).)

## Tamil American Peace Initiative Responds to SL Foreign Minister's US Visit and Calls for International Investigation into War Crimes

With the arrival of Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister G.L. Peiris in Washington during the week of May 22nd, Tamil American Peace Initiative (TAPI) urged members of Congress and the Obama Administration to press the international community to pursue independent investigations into the alleged war crimes that occurred during Sri Lanka's twenty-five year Civil War.

"Many in the international community have been calling for an investigation since the end of the war," said Dr. Karunyan Arulanantham, a TAPI spokesperson. "The Sri Lankans who suffered abuse and lost family members and livelihoods can no longer wait. Justice must come to Sri Lanka."

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the European Union have already called for independent investigations. Additionally, various human rights groups, including the International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Committee to Protect Journalists, have also called for an independent investigation into war crimes, crimes

against humanity and human rights violations. Despite these calls, UN efforts to investigate have been stalled.

The groups cite violations on both sides in the war, however they present evidence that places most of the blame on the Sri Lankan troops. The alleged crimes include intentional bombings of civilians and humanitarian organizations; extrajudicial abuse and detention of unarmed civilians and former combatants; the use of child soldiers; harm to civilians and civilian objects; the killing of captives or combatants seeking to surrender; individual disappearances; and inhumane conditions.

TAPI is particularly concerned with the Sri Lankan External Affairs Minister G.L. Peiris' recent request for the UN to refrain from appointing a panel to advise the Secretary General concerning an investigation into war crimes and crimes against humanity. Peiris has demanded that the UN allow the Sri Lankan government to handle all such investigations.

This demand is particularly disturbing because the government-appointed chairman of the

commission, Chitta Ranjan de Silva came under serious criticism for alleged interference with a similar investigation in 2006. As Arthur Dewey, former US assistant secretary of state for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration has said, "De Silva was the architect and enforcer of the attorney general's conflict of interest role with respect to the 2006 commission... nothing good for human rights or reconciliation is likely to come from anything in which De Silva is involved."

TAPI is urging law makers to raise these issues and to push for an independent international investigation into crimes committed during the war.

TAPI agrees with the Congressman Hon. Danny Davis, who stated in a Floor Speech commemorating the one-year anniversary of the end of the Sri Lankan war that "All parties complicit in violating human rights must be held accountable. Only then can the Sri Lankan people really move forward in trying to achieve peace and stability on the island."

About TAPI:

The Tamil American Peace



Members of TAPI along with several Tamil Americans and friends gathered at the Lincoln Memorial, in Washington DC - on May 15th, 2010 to commemorate the 40,000 civilians killed last spring as the war ended in Sri Lanka.

Initiative was formed by a group of Tamil communities and culture of Tamil Americans to help bring lasting peace, justice, democracy, good governance and economic development to Sri Lanka; to focus attention on the destruction

caused by 30 years of war; and to demand an end to the continuing oppression of Tamils on the island.

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## Extended Bar Hours During 2010 FIFA World Cup

McGuinty Government Provides Special Exemption During World Cup Celebrations

Ontario will allow licensed bars and restaurants to serve alcoholic beverages an hour earlier during the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

The province recognizes the significance of the World Cup to many people in this province and because of that, it is making this special exemption to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario's (AGCO) policy on extended bar and restaurant hours.

From June 11 to July 11, 2010, bars and restaurants in municipalities across the province will have approval to open at 10:00 a.m., unless a municipality objects in writing to the AGCO.

The games are being telecast from South Africa, which represents a six-hour time difference within Ontario - some games will start as early as 7:30 a.m. Eastern Standard time.

"This is great news for Ontario's World Cup fans. Hockey may be Canada's national sport,



but soccer's popularity is steadily growing in Ontario -- and this special approval will allow people to celebrate the excitement of the World Cup."

- Sophia Aggelonitis, Minister of Consumer Services

Standard service hours for the province of Ontario are from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m., with certain exceptions. Allowing the sale of alcohol an hour earlier could provide an important economic boost to bars, restaurants and cafes across the province.

The AGCO administers the Liquor Licence Act in Ontario and reports to the province's Minister of Consumer Services.

## Prime Minister Stephen Harper thanks on Canada's Economic Action Plan

Prime Minister Stephen Harper participated in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities 73rd annual Conference, delivering a key note address on the opening day.

In his speech, the Prime Minister noted the gravity of the economic crisis Canada and the world faced in 2009. The worldwide economic recession required immediate and comprehensive action from the Government of Canada. Through Canada's Economic Action Plan, the Government moved quickly to preserve and create jobs and help families, workers and businesses weather the economic storm.

"Your partnership in Canada's Economic Action Plan from coast to coast to coast has been one of the best things we have had going for us as we cope with the global recession from which we are beginning to emerge," said

Prime Minister Harper. "In fact, it has been absolutely decisive."

The Prime Minister noted that with the help of municipalities and provinces, stimulus funds are being injected into the Canadian economy through the Economic Action Plan. More than 16,000 projects - both large and small - have been committed to across the country under the EAP. Most of the projects are now well underway. The Prime Minister also emphasized that the Government will not extend the EAP beyond March 31, 2011, and would return quickly to balanced budgets, as Canadians expect.

"People can't live on adrenaline, and economies can't live on stimulus," said the Prime Minister. "We must return to the black, not drown in the red."

The Prime Minister also reassured municipalities that the Government would continue to

## Prime Minister Stephen Harper welcomes Aga Khan to Canada

Prime Minister Stephen Harper on May 28th met with His Highness the Aga Khan, who was in Toronto to take part in the Foundation Ceremony of the Ismaili Centre, the Aga Khan Museum and Park. The Imam was on an official visit to Canada from May 26-28.

"Canada is honoured to have been chosen as the site for these important institutions," said the Prime Minister. They will serve to promote pluralism, peace and tolerance through greater understanding of Islam."

The Museum, which is an education project of the Aga Khan Development Network, will be dedicated to the acquisition, preservation and display of artefacts relating to the intellectual, cultural, artistic and religious heritage of Muslim civilizations. It is scheduled to open in Toronto in 2013. During the visit, Canada will formally grant honorary citizenship to His Highness the Aga Khan, an initiative that was passed unanimously in the House of Commons on June 19, 2009.

"Conferring honorary citizenship upon His Highness the Aga Khan is a recognition of His Highness's leadership as a champion of international development, pluralism and tolerance around the world and of his remarkable leadership as Imam of the worldwide Ismaili community," said the Prime Minister.

The Aga Khan is the Imam of the world's 15 million Shia Ismaili Muslims. The Government of

invest in programs in support of municipalities, including the Building Canada Fund, and the Gas Tax Rebate Program.

He also noted that all the important economic indicators point to a recovery already underway in Canada.

"Canada was the last major developed country dragged into the recession, we will be the least affected by it, and we will emerge from it fastest and in the strongest position of them all," said the Prime Minister.



Canada has a strong, long-standing relationship with the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) that spans more than 25 years. AKFC is a trusted partner of Canada on a wide range of international development projects, including in Afghanistan, in the areas of health, education, rural and economic development, and the creation of new opportunities for women.

### HONOURARY CITIZENSHIP BESTOWED UPON HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN

On June 19, 2009, on the advice of the Government of Canada, the House of Commons voted to bestow Honorary Canadian Citizenship upon His Highness the Aga Khan in recognition of His Highness's leadership as a champion of development, pluralism and tolerance around the world and of his remarkable leadership as Imam of the worldwide Shia Ismaili Muslim community.

The Aga Khan is the spiritual head of the world's 15 million Ismaili Muslims. Ismailis make up the world's second largest Shia

grouping and are spread throughout 25 countries. Ismailis now number roughly 70,000 in Canada. Most Canadian Ismaili Muslims arrived in this country after being forced out of Uganda by its former ruler Idi Amin in the 1970s.

Honourary citizenship is an extraordinary recognition that is above and beyond the established system of honours, such as the Order of Canada. It is a political decision conferred upon a recipient by joint resolution of the Houses in Parliament.

Only four other people have been granted honorary Canadian citizenship:

Aung San Suu Kyi, imprisoned Burmese democracy advocate and Nobel laureate (2007).

Tenzin Gyatso, the current and 14th Dalai Lama (2006).

Nelson Mandela, anti-apartheid activist and former President of South Africa (2001).

Raoul Wallenberg, Swedish diplomat noted for his actions during the Holocaust (1985, granted posthumously).

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**MONSOON  
SPORTS**

**Raymond Rajabalan**

World Cup was first held in Uruguay in 1930, was contested as a final tournament of only 13 teams invited by the organization. Since then, the FIFA World Cup has undergone successive expansions and format remodeling to its current 32-team final tournament preceded by a two-year qualifying process, involving almost 200 teams from all over the world.

#### The first official World Cup

FIFA president Jules Rimet set about organizing the inaugural World Cup tournament to be held in Uruguay in 1930. The choice of Uruguay as a venue for the competition meant a long and costly trip across the Atlantic Ocean for European sides. Indeed, no European country pledged to send a team until two months before the start of the competition. Rimet eventually persuaded teams from Belgium, France, Romania, and Yugoslavia to make the trip. In total 13 nations took part - seven from South America, four from Europe and two from North America. The first two World Cup matches took place simultaneously, and were won by France and the USA, who beat Mexico 4-1 and Belgium 3-0, respectively. The first goal in World Cup history was scored by Lucien Laurent of France. Four days later, the first World Cup hat-trick was achieved by Bert Patenaude of USA in the Americans' 3-0 win against Paraguay. In the final, Uruguay defeated Argentina 4-2 in the presence of a crowd of 93,000 people in Montevideo, and became the first nation to win a World Cup.

#### World cup 1934-2010 1934

The 1934 World Cup was hosted by Italy, and was the first World Cup to include a qualification stage. 16 teams qualified for the tournament, a number which would be retained until the expansion of the finals tournament in 1982. Uruguay, the title-holders from 1930, still upset about the poor European showing at their World Cup in 1930, boycotted the 1934 World Cup.

Bolivia and Paraguay were absent, allowing Argentina and Brazil to go to the finals in Italy without having to play any qualifying matches. Egypt became the first African team to compete, but

# World Cup - A Historical overview

lost to Hungary in the first round. Italy won the tournament, but faced accusations of biased officiating, with Benito Mussolini said to have influenced the choice of referees for Italy's matches

#### 1938

The 1938 World Cup competition was also held in Europe, much to the consternation of many South Americans, with Uruguay and Argentina boycotting. For the first time the title holders and the host country were given automatic qualification. Following a play-off match against Latvia, Austria had officially qualified for the final round but because of the de facto annexation of Austria into greater Germany by Nazi regime in April 1938, could not attend.

Their place was offered to England, but they declined. This left the Finals with 15 nations competing. France hosted, but for the first time the hosts did not win the competition, as Italy retained their title, beating Hungary in the final. Polish striker Ernest Willimowski became the first player to score four goals in a World Cup game during Poland's 6-5 loss against Brazil; his record was later equalled by other players, but was bettered only 56 years later in the 1994 World Cup.

#### World War II & World cup competitions

The FIFA World Cup was originally planned to take place again in 1942. Germany officially applied to host the FIFA World Cup 1942 on the 23rd FIFA Congress on August 13, 1936 in Berlin. In June 1939 Brazil also applied to host the tournament. However, after the beginning of World War II, further plans for the World Cup 1942 were cancelled. The tournament did not take place in 1942.. The aftermath of World War II also caused the cancellation of the 1946 tournament.

#### Competition resumed with the 1950 World Cup in Brazil

#### Evolution of Modern Day World Cup 1950-2006 1950

Competition resumed with the 1950 World Cup in Brazil, which was the first to include British participants. British teams withdrew from FIFA in 1920, partly out of unwillingness to play against the countries they had been at war with, and partly as a protest against a foreign influence to football, but rejoined in 1946 following FIFA's invitation. However, England's involvement was not to be a success.

The English failed to make the final group round in a campaign that included a 1-0 loss to the United States. The tournament also saw the return of 1930



**Bicycle-kick by Brazilian star Pele**

champions Uruguay, who had boycotted the previous two World Cups. For political reasons, Eastern European countries did not enter. Title-holder Italy did take part, despite the Superga air disaster of 1949 in which the entire Grande Torino team were killed. The 1950 World Cup was the only tournament not to stage a final tie, replacing knockout rounds with two group phases. However, the final match of the second group phase was in effect a final, as the group standings meant the winners would be crowned champions. Uruguay



**2010 FIFA World Cup logo**

were surprise victors over hosts Brazil and became champions for the second time.

#### 1954

The 1954 World Cup, held in Switzerland, was the first to be televised. The Soviet Union did not participate because of their dismal performance at the 1952 Summer Olympics. Scotland made their first ever appearance in the tournament, but were unable to register a win, going out after the group stage. The quarter-final match between Austria and Switzerland saw a World Cup record of number of goals scored in a match, when the Swiss lost 5-7, after going 3-0 up. West Germany was the tournament winner, defeating Olympic champions Hungary 3-2 in the final, overturning a 2-0 deficit in the process, with Helmut Rahn scoring the winner.

#### 1958

Brazil won the 1958 World Cup, held in Sweden, and became

the first and so far only team to win a World Cup outside their home continent (though they repeated the feat in 2002). The Soviet Union participated this time, most likely due to their win at Melbourne 1956. For the first time, all four British teams qualified for the final round. Wales was able to take advantage of a situation in the Africa/Asia zone, where the amount of withdrawals would give Israel qualification without having played a single qualifying match. This prompted FIFA to rule that qualification without playing was not allowed, and so Israel were ordered to play against one of the teams finishing second in the other groups. A tie was created, and Wales defeated Israel 2-0 twice in 1958. It was the first time that a country played a World Cup final round after having been eliminated in the regular qualifiers. The tournament also saw the emergence of Pelé, who scored two goals in the final. French striker Just Fontaine became the top scorer of the tournament with a still standing record of 13 goals.

#### 1962

Chile hosted the 1962 World Cup. Before play began, an earthquake struck, the largest ever recorded at 9.5 magnitude, prompting officials to rebuild due to major damage to infrastructure. When the competition began, two of the best players were in poor form as Pelé was injured in Brazil's second group match versus Czechoslovakia. Also, USSR saw their goalkeeper Lev Yashin show poor form including a 2-1 loss to hosts Chile as that team, inspired by team spirit captured third place.

The competition was also marred by overly defensive and often violent tactics. This poisonous atmosphere culminated in what was known as the Battle of Santiago first round match between Italy and Chile in which Chile won 2-0. Prior to the match, two Italian journalists wrote unflattering articles about the host country. In the match, play-

ers on both sides made deliberate attempts to harm opponents though only two players from Italy were sent off by English referee Ken Aston. In the end, the Italian team needed police protection to leave the field in safety.

When the final whistle blew, Brazil beat Czechoslovakia for the second World Cup in a row by a final of 3-1 led by Garrincha and Amarildo, in Pelé's absence, and retained the Jules Rimet trophy.

#### 1966

The 1966 World Cup, hosted by England, was the first to embrace marketing, featuring a mascot and official logo for the first time. South Africa was banned for violating the anti-discrimination charter. The ban remained in effect until 1992 when the South Africa Football Association was finally accepted by FIFA. The qualifying rounds of the tournament saw a controversy when the African nations decided to withdraw in protest of only one qualifying place allocated by FIFA to the regions of Asia, Oceania and Africa. The eventual qualifiers from the zone, North Korea, became the first Asian team to reach the quarter-finals, eliminating Italy in the process. England won the tournament. Geoff Hurst became the first and to this day the only player to score a hat-trick in a World Cup Final and Eusébio, whose team Portugal were taking part in their first World Cup, was the tournament top-scorer, with 9 goals to his name.

#### 1970

The qualification stages of the 1970 World Cup were the cause of the Football War between Honduras and El Salvador. The finals were held in Mexico. Israel had been with Europe, but due to political issues, it was becoming harder to place them adequately in the qualifying rounds. They were grouped in Asia/Oceania. Democratic People's Republic of Korea then refused to meet them, even though this meant automatic disqualification. The group stage clash between defending champions England and Brazil lived up to its billing, and is still remembered for England goalkeeper Gordon Banks' save from a Pelé header on the six-yard line, arguably the greatest save ever. The tournament is also remembered for the semi-final match between Italy and West Germany, in which 5 goals were scored in extra time, and Franz Beckenbauer played with a broken arm, since Germany had used up all their allowed substitutions.

Italy was the eventual 4-3 winners, but were defeated 1-4 in the final by Brazil, who became

the first nation to win three World Cups, and were awarded the Jules Rimet trophy permanently for their achievement.

**1974**

A new trophy was created for the 1974 edition, held in West Germany. After a draw in their first Intercontinental play-off match against Chile in the qualifiers, the Soviet Union refused to travel to the Chilean capital for the return fixture for political reasons, and in accordance with the regulations, Chile were awarded a victory. East Germany, Haiti, Australia and Zaire made their first finals. The tournament also saw a new format, where the two top teams from each of the earlier four groups were divided into two groups of four each again, the winner of either group playing each other in the final. The West German hosts won the competition by beating the Netherlands 2-1 in the final, but it was also the revolutionary Total Football system of the Dutch that captured the footballing world's imagination. The very well-playing Poland finished third, after defeating Brazil 1-0, having barely lost in terrible rain in the semifinals to West Germany 0-1.

**1978**

The 1978 World Cup was held in Argentina, causing controversy as a military coup had taken place in the country two years earlier. Dutch star Johan Cruyff refused to participate for this reason, though none of the teams decided to stay away. Iran and Tunisia were first time participants. There was some on-field controversy as well, when Argentina, needing to win by a clear four goals in order to make the final in place of Brazil, beat Peru 6-0, the total number of goals they had scored in the tournament till this match. They went on to win the final 3-1, Mario Kempes scoring twice, with the Dutch being runners-up for the second time running.

**1982**

Spain hosted an expanded 1982 World Cup which featured 24 teams, the first expansion since 1934. The teams were divided into six groups of four, with the top two teams in each group advancing to the second round, where they split into four groups of three. The winners of each group advanced to the semifinals. Cameroon, Algeria, Honduras, New Zealand and Kuwait were the debutants. The group match between Kuwait and France was stage of a farcical incident. As the French were leading 3-1, the Kuwaiti team stopped playing after hearing a whistle from the stands which they thought had come from referee, as French defender Maxime Bossis scored. As the Kuwaiti team were protesting the goal, Sheikh Fahid Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah,

president of the Kuwaiti Football Association, rushed onto the pitch and gave the referee a piece of his mind, who proceeded to disallow the goal. Bossis scored another valid goal a few minutes later and France won 4-1.

Also during the group stages Hungary beat El Salvador 10-1, which has been the only occasion to this day that a team scored 10 goals in a World Cup match. The group match between West Germany and Austria later resulted in a change of World Cup rules, after both teams visibly aimed to keep the qualification ensuring 1-0 score line over 80 minutes. The semi-final between West Germany and France saw another controversy when German keeper Harald Schumacher's challenge took out Patrick Battiston, with the score at 1-1. Schumacher escaped a red card, and Germany won in a penalty shoot-out, after coming back to level from having gone 1-3 down. The final was won by Italy, making Italian captain Dino Zoff the oldest player to win the World Cup and Alessandro Altobelli to become the first substitute player to score in the final. Italian striker Paolo Rossi, who was making his comeback after a match-fixing scandal and the ensuing ban, was the tournament top-scorer with six goals including a classic hat-trick against Brazil.

**1986**



**Jabulani, the official match ball of 2010 FIFA World Cup**

Mexico became the first nation to hold two World Cups by hosting the 1986 World Cup. The format changed again, with the second round being replaced by a pre-quarterfinal, knockout competition, for which 16 teams would qualify.

It was also decided that the final two matches in all groups would kick off simultaneously, to ensure complete fairness. Canada, Denmark and Iraq made their first finals. José Batista of Uruguay set a World Cup record being sent off after a mere 56 seconds into the game against Scotland. The quarterfinal match between England and Argentina is remembered for two remarkable Diego Maradona goals, later regarded as player of the tournament,

the first, the controversial Hand of God goal, and the second, considered to be the Goal of the Century, in which he dribbled half the length of the field past five English players before scoring. In the final, Argentina beat West Germany 3-2, inspired by



**Zakumi, the mascot of 2010 FIFA World Cup**

Diego Maradona, who set up Jorge Burruchaga for the winner.

**1990**

The 1990 World Cup was held in Italy. Cameroon reached the quarter-finals, a first for an African team. Mexico was unable to compete in the 1990 World Cup preliminary competition as a result of a two-year ban for age fraud at a youth championship; the United States qualified for the first time since 1950. An unpleasant episode marred the South American preliminaries: during the match between Brazil and Chile, a firework landed close to the Chilean goalkeeper Rojas, who then feigned injury by cutting his own face with a razor blade he had hidden in his glove. His team refused to continue the match. The plot was discovered and resulted in a 12 year suspension for Rojas and to Chile being banned from the World Cup in 1994. The final featured the same teams as in 1986. After finishing runners-up in the two previous tournaments, West Germany won their third World Cup.

**1994**

The 1994 World Cup, held in the USA, saw the first World Cup final to be decided on penalties, with Brazil edging out Italy.

Yugoslavia was excluded due to UN sanctions in connection with the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Russia played their first World Cup competition as a new country, with Greece, Nigeria, Norway and Saudi Arabia as the other first-timers. Along with disgrace - Diego Maradona being banned mid-tournament after testing positive for performance-enhancing drugs - the tournament also saw tragedy when Colombian defender Andrés Escobar was murdered 10 days after his own-goal against the hosts in their first round match that eliminated Colombia. The total attendance for the final tournament of nearly 3.6 million remains the greatest in World Cup history. Oleg Salenko of Russia became the first player to score five goals in a single World Cup finals game in his country's 6-1 group stage win over Cameroon. The same match, 42-year old Roger Milla scored the



**Italy - 2006 World Cup Winner**

only goal for Cameroon, becoming the oldest player ever to score in a World Cup match.

**1998**

The 1998 World Cup was held in France, and had an expanded format featuring 32 teams. Iran beat the Maldives in qualification by the widest margin in World Cup history - 17-0. In the finals, the second round match between France and Paraguay witnessed the first Golden Goal in World Cup history, as Laurent Blanc scored to give the hosts a 1-0 victory. Hosts France won the tournament by beating Brazil 3-0 in the final, as the scorer of four goals in the



tournament, Ronaldo, appeared to be less than a hundred percent in the match, and was unable to make any impact. Debutants Croatia finished a commendable third.

**2002**

The 2002 World Cup was the first to be held in Asia, and was hosted jointly by Japan and South Korea. Togolese Souleymane Mamam became the youngest player ever to take to a World Cup preliminary game field at 13 years, 310 days in Lomé in May 2001. Australia defeated American Samoa 31-0 in a preliminary match - a new record for the margin of victory, and the highest-scoring match ever. The tournament was a successful one for teams traditionally regarded as minnows, with South Korea, Senegal and USA all reaching the last eight. Brazil beat Germany 2-0 in the final for their fifth title.

**2006**

The 2006 World Cup was held in Germany. It is the first World Cup for which the previous winner had to qualify; the host nation(s) will continue to receive an automatic berth. First seed and holders Brazil and second seeded England were initially English bookmakers' favourites. A strong performance by Germany brought them as far as the semifinals. However, the final match-up was between Italy and France, in which French captain Zinedine Zidane was sent off in the last 10 minutes of extra time for a headbutt to the chest of Italian central defender Marco Materazzi. Italy went on to win 5-3 in a penalty shootout, the score having been 1-1 after 90 minutes and extra time.



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Sri Lankan military is hindering the betterment of Tamil returnees' lives and does not stop abuse and violence directed at them. This according to AsiaNews.it, a media division of the PIME Missionaries (A Missionary Institute of Catholic priests and brothers dedicated to the missions among non-Christians). In an interview with Rukshan Fernando, human rights activist and director of the Justice, Law & Society Trust, Colombo published on Jun 1st AsiaNews.it reveal that, "the area is still actually in the hands of the military, which allowed the return of the population but force them to live in absolute poverty."

Full text of the interview by Melani Manel Perera as follows:

A year after the end of the war in the north, the situation is described as "calm and peaceful" by the government and ordinary people. But some visitors who do not fall into these two categories, think differently. One of them is Rukshan Fernando, human rights activist and director of the Justice, Law & Society Trust, Colombo. Returning from a trip to Vanni, he tells AsiaNews that the situation is far from peaceful.

Many of the people encountered in the area have begun talking with big smiles, saying they were glad to be back in their lands despite losing all their possessions and adverse conditions. But as they talked, "I was left speechless at seeing that eyes that filled with tears." Many families have returned to their homes incomplete: not only without ownership, but without family, killed, missing or detained.

**How was your trip to Vanni given the restrictions on mobility?**

On most occasions as we

# Sri Lanka Army blocks attempts to improve the lives of Tamil returnees - Human Rights Activist

turned from the A9 road or from the Mannar - Medwachiya road to go interior villages, it seemed to arouse suspicion and curiosity in soldiers. Familiar questions of earlier years, such as "where are you going?" "why are you going?" "who are you" were thrown at us. Our response that we are going to visit friends didn't appear to be a satisfactory answer. In the Vanni, it seems to be considered something abnormal and suspicious to visit friends!

My Tamils friends from the North found these questions offensive. "This is our land, our people are living here, these soldiers are from outside, how dare they ask us all these questions and stop us? Why can't I visit my place? Why can't I visit my relatives and friends? Why can't I invite friends (meaning me)?" were the angry and frustrated refrain I was to hear often from my friends. The fact that I was Sinhalese from Colombo seemed to arouse further suspicions and curiosity amongst the soldiers. We asked why they were trying to stop us from visiting, especially as these were areas formally declared as areas cleared of land mines and people were already living there. "We don't know, we just follow orders" was the inevitable response. Some of the soldiers were apologetic.

On several occasions, it was mentioned that we have to get permission from the Ministry of Defense or that we should go to a nearby Brigade Headquarters and get special permission or a pass. My friends and I tried to maintain our composure and sometimes soldiers at the check points tried to help us by contacting their superiors while we waited patiently. Some occasions, soldiers did their best to sooth our frustration by offering us chairs, chatting to us and giving us tips



about how bad the roads were! I didn't think they had anything else to offer. On one occasion, we waited for about 30 minutes near Paranthan on the A9 road and one soldier rode on a bicycle to inform the checkpoint that the commander had given a special permission for us to proceed to Uruthirapuram.

On another occasion, me and a priest friend from Mannar waited in vain in the hot sun for about an hour at the Mankulam junction check point awaiting permission to visit the recently returned people in Oddusudan. The permission never came and we left the embarrassed and apologetic soldiers at the checkpoint and turned back. Anyways, like we did with the LTTE during the time they were in control of the Vanni and restricting travel to Mullativu and other interior villages, my friends and I did manage to negotiate with those trying to stop us and visit our friends in the interior villages.

**Some speak of a "militarisation" of the area, what did you experience in this regards?**

Yes, On most roads inside the Vanni, whether on the A9 or interior roads, I felt as if we were traveling within a military camp. Military camps and check posts were along all the roads. In Pooneryn, the main road literally ran through a newly built Army camp. In several other places including the A9 road, army camps occupied the main tarred road and we as civilians were forced to take a roundabout route, on muddy dusty makeshift pathways. In the more bushy and jungle areas, sign boards on the roadside indicated military camps inside the jungles. Soldiers were everywhere with uniforms and with weapons.

Some soldiers were in civil but were easily identifiable through the gun on their shoulders, even

as they were walking or riding their bicycles. Other soldiers were relaxing, playing cricket and bathing in small streams. The buildings that were in the best conditions were all military and police structures. I could very well empathize with what one elderly gentleman in Mulangavil told me; "it looks as if it's their (military) land and we are strangers, while the truth is they are occupying our land".

Clearly, the military has less to do on military matters now. I saw and heard in several places that the military is assisting with road construction, distributing water, organizing cultural and sports events etc. I also heard of efforts of some military officials to assist civilians in their basic needs. In view of the massive needs of the population for basic services and infrastructure, and the very weak civil administration and reluctance of the government to allow NGOs access to help those in need, people are compelled to depend on the military for even basic services like water.

Also, when I went to Eechalavakai, along the Periyamadu Road from Vidathalthivu, in the Mannar district. There, I met some people who were still living in tents in a common village land as displaced persons. Amongst them was a 10 day old infant. "We were told by the Divisional Secretary that we can go back to our lands. So we came from the camps. But when we came and started to clean up the land, the land we have been living for more than 25 years, the Army came and told us to go away. When we asked why, they told us that they are going to take our land for a Army Camp" one villager told us. Later, we were shown their lands, in nearby Sannar, where notices were pinned to trees saying "This land is reserved for Army"

**Are there still security**

**fears in the area?**

Of course! The huge military presence, with past experiences of abuses, has caused deep rooted fear amongst many of civilians I spoke to. "We are scared to have young girls and boys walk around in the dark" one mother told us. Catholic sisters who had gone to be with the people had sent additional reinforcements, as they didn't want sisters to be alone. "I was accused several times by the Army intelligence of being in the LTTE. Another boy was also accused. The Army had also told a villager that I would be taken away. I'm scared and don't go anywhere alone" was what one man in Kathalampiddy, close to Vidathalthivu told us. "Although only two people had been threatened, the whole village is now scared" another woman from the village told us. They are living the thought of "Will the Army leave soon?" which I had no answer.

**Many also fear of sexual abuse committed by military ...**

Yes, we come to know about some incidents but some of them could not get confirmed. "In front of our own eyes, and inside our premises, the army was touching a young girl...so what would happen if we are also not there" one Catholic sister asked me when I met her in the Vanni. Amidst the huge military presence, one lady was raped in newly resettled area of Alkataveli, close to Adampan and north of Mannar and one person was killed in Killinochi. The checkpoint and soldiers with their guns had been unable to prevent or bring perpetrators to justice. An incident of sexual abuse by a soldier in Nachikuda was narrated to me. I heard of other incidents of rape, sexual abuse, killings, but could not get confirmation.

**What is the situation of freedom of association?**

The government is also trying to restrict any peaceful mobilization, collective action of empowerment of people in the Vanni. The Presidential Task Force headed by the President's brother Basil Rajapakse had granted permission to some NGOs to launch some projects to assist people in need of assistance. One head of an NGO based in Mannar told me "permission has been granted only to build houses and infrastructure and start income generating activities. Permission has been rejected for counselling, capacity building and empowerment activities. So we are restricted in what we can do".

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# Finding Darwin's God

It is the title of a book by Dr. Kenneth Miller, professor of biology at Brown University. This book was reviewed highly, praised by outstanding scientists and well as by religious scholars, since it deals with the debate between science and religion, specifically around Darwin's theory of evolution.

The book explains evolution in a lucid and lively manner, drawing illustrations and analysis from the latest developments in science, especially geology, paleontology, cell biology, biochemistry and so on. Charles Darwin was a genius who examined the biological data available to him as he traveled around South America and the Pacific Islands.

He observed variations and gradual mutations in the living organisms as they adapt to their environment for the sake of survival and expansion. Then he came up with the theory of natural selection and evolution to explain the past and future of life on earth. Darwin was an open-minded scientist willing to accept that his theory could be falsified in the future. Instead, modern scientific developments see a greater fit between the theory and the data.

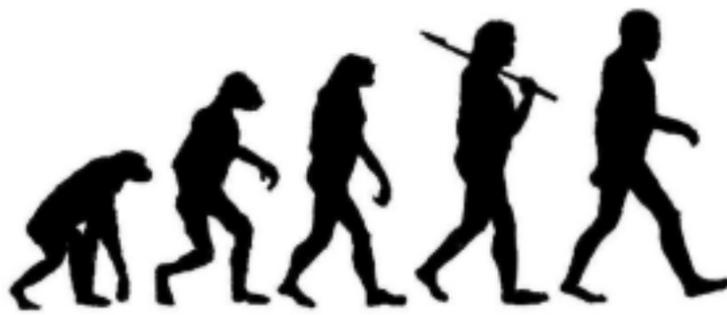
There is no doubt about Kenneth Miller's whole-hearted commitment to science and religion; consequently he disappoints dogmatists on either side. Though Miller's brilliant book can enlighten many readers, and enable them to be open to science and religion, I find his concept of God and knowledge of religion to be wanting in some ways.

Miller dismisses primitive religions as animism, outmoded and unworthy of civilized man. Is it wrong to worship the sun, moon, trees and animals as God? What is God? Can we know God directly? Throughout

History people in all the parts of the world have found God, and heard His words.

God who declared to Moses: "I am who am," said to St. Catherine of Sienna: "Catherine, remember this most fundamental truth, namely, I am, and you are not." God alone is; He is the ultimate Reality. Everything else is an expression or manifestation of God. Otherwise God cannot be infinite. To see the Infinite in a grain of sand is our call, in the words of the mystical poet William Blake.

When so called primitive people worshipped idols and other natural forms, some of the worshippers were wholly focused and one-pointed. Due to their all-con-



suming devotion, they inevitably went beyond the external forms, and realized God's holy Presence within themselves and everywhere. God has to respond to sincere and loving worship. He cannot help but reveal Himself eventually to a loving devotee, however humble and ignorant he may be of worldly matters.

God ever remains a closed book to the intellectually sophisticated, conscious of their superiority and knowledge. "I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth. I praise you because you have hidden these things from the people who are wise and smart. But you have shown them to those who are like little children." (Mt. 11:25) These words of Christ have been true throughout history.

It is not at all surprising that many scientists and philosophers are agnostics and atheists. Even most of the believers are practical atheists, behaving as if there is no God. We tend to be egoistic and internally disturbed due to endless desires and restless thoughts. Genuine faith on the other hand fills one's heart with peace, love, and joy.

Sincere seekers of God are few. According to the Hindu scriptures, only one in a thousand seeks God; among those who seek Him, only one in a thousand actually finds Him. Scientists due to their remarkable achievement can be easily conceited. No proud person can come close to the grace of seeking God, let alone finding Him.

Doing science is an arduous task. One cannot become a great scientist without the passion for the scientific enterprise. Hundred times harder is the task of seeking and finding God. The desire for God must burn out all other desires. The heart and mind must be aflame with an intense yearning for God day and night.

Miller notes that some scientists seeing the imperfections and cruelty in nature reject the concept of a loving Creator who intelligently designed His creation. Miller's response to this problem is to state that material nature is separate from God, and functions independently. He thinks that only then can man be free to accept or

reject God who is not responsible for the evil and chaos in the world. The future of creation is altogether unknown; it can be determined by man through conscious choice.

The future and past are present in God. That is the meaning of eternity, which is not comprehensible to a time bound human intellect; 'before' and 'after' have to do with time. Since God is beyond time, one may question the possibility of purpose and plan for creation in God. Though apparently contradictory, man yearns to see the meaning and purpose of God in His chaotic creation.

Paramahansa Yogananda, a Hindu sage who lived in America for thirty years and consciously left his body in 1952, loved God deeply from his early childhood. Becoming an accomplished yogi as a youth, through his spiritual eye he could see all the horrors and cruelty in the depth of the oceans and in the heart of the jungles million times more than the scientists. His compassionate and caring heart was filled with anguish at such suffering. He held God responsible for it all, and cried: "Lord why, oh why Lord."

His constant cries of anguish brought a response from God in the form of a vision. He was able to see the future of creation where all the evil was transformed into good in such a fitting and beautiful manner, that he was amazed by the great wisdom and love in the plan and purpose of creation. Yogananda could not complain any longer. He was filled with peace and joy.

Our faith in the wisdom and love of God tells us that God would not allow evil except for a higher good. The vision of Yogananda confirms and strengthens our faith.

By considering nature as separate and independent from God, Kenneth Miller makes God limited. God is infinite. There can be nothing separate and independent from God. Nothing is outside God. Ex nihilo nihil fit. Nothing can come from nothing. Hence all nature is a manifestation or expression of God's supreme consciousness and unlimited energy. Though God is totally perfect and

transcends creation, He is also immanent in nature, and can lead creation towards greater perfection.

Unlike science where there is universal agreement on its essential principles and methodology, religions seem to be at war at least conceptually. How does one figure out the truth, when even the existence of God is not affirmed by some religious?

It is not all easy. As stated earlier, seeking and finding God is more difficult than pursuing science. However, a sincere seeker who patiently perseveres to the end will be led by God Himself to find the truth by following a Christ-like Master.

Lord Buddha came at a time when there was much confusion, corruption and superstitions practiced in the name of God. Hence he opted to be silent about God, but taught his followers to renounce worldly desires, act compassionately, and meditate with full concentration in order to be free from suffering.

Meditation takes us beyond bodily sensations, thoughts, sense of time and space into the deep silence of pure consciousness, full of peace and joy. Buddha called this state Nirvana. I would say that Lord Buddha made his disciples experience God without talking about God. Completely conscious and perfect silence is God. "Be still, and know that I am God." (Ps. 46:10) says the Bible.

Due to the cruelty, corruption and chaos in the world, some people may be tempted to see life as ultimately meaningless, and be satisfied with superficial pleasures. It is an easy cop-out, and shows an unadventurous spirit. Naturally such people cannot find God.

Ammachi who is a Christ-like Master asks the people who are unable to believe in God to believe in themselves. Faith in their higher self makes them to be truthful, humble and courageous. Then one is ready to search for the ultimate meaning of life or yearn for God.

The theory of evolution has to be accepted, since random mutations and selection of adaptive variations are facts of nature. Amazing intelligence and design are also evident in nature. Design implies plan and some knowledge about the future. Foreknowledge of saints about human events is an established fact. How can one reconcile divine foreknowledge and man's freedom? It seems to be an intellectually intractable problem.

Miracles do occur, not through any supernatural intervention from the outside, but because matter itself is ultimately spiritual. Consciousness pervades animate



and inanimate matter.

Masaru Emoto, a Japanese researcher shows that there is consciousness in water. He repeated many experiments to find how water responded to positive and negative words. Spoken or written positive words made the water crystallize into beautiful, symmetrical patterns whereas negative words made the patterns chaotic and ugly.

George Washington Carver, the great agricultural scientist was also a deeply spiritual person. He carried on long conversations with flowers daily. This humble scientist attributed much of his scientific discoveries to these communications.

Christ was in a boat with His disciples in the lake of Galilee when the disciples feared that they would be drowned due to a sudden storm. Lord Jesus commanded the winds and the waves to be calm, and they calmed down immediately. There are amazing stories about the Arabian Sea that fronts Ammachi's ashram in India, and its conscious and loving relationship with Amma.

God is not a matter of belief for Amma, but a direct and continuous experience. It is the reason for Her utter humility and selfless love that exudes from Her and embraces the thousands who come daily to be hugged and consoled by Her.

Though Amma studied up to fourth grade only, many physicians, engineers, scientists, philosophers, businessmen and scripture scholars are Her close disciples. They are convinced that there is no limit to Amma's understanding, since they are aware of Her precise and profound knowledge in their respective fields of expertise. She seems to know whatever She needs and wants to know.

Ammachi advises us to bow down to all animate and inanimate matter, as varied expressions of God. When we become humble and allow ourselves to be guided by perfect Masters like Amma, there can be no doubt about finding God and eventually understanding everything.

Though those who seek God consciously are rather few, according to Yogananda, all including atheists are seeking God unconsciously. Every one wants to be happy always. God is endless, ever new bliss, unlimited energy and perfect wisdom. If we have a proper concept of God, it is impossible not to love Him and yearn to be aware of Her Presence.



by Jan Jananayagam

Vanakkam

We are here to pay our respects to the people of the Vanni and to seek justice for them.

We stand here in Washington DC in the very heart of a nation built on a promise, on the promise that all are equal, all are free and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.

We have come here to honour a people who pursued this God-given promise with their very life.

The Vanni region has always been a part of Tamil Eelam. But it has historically been a safe haven. When the Catholic Church fled persecution by the Protestant Dutch in 1670, it was to the Vanni that the Virgin of Madhu fled.

When the Sri Lankan army invaded the North in 1995, it was to the Vanni that the Tamil people as a whole fled; a whole people emptied from their ancestral lands to a new frontier - the largest exodus of a people fleeing persecution in this century.

In 1995, when the Sri Lanka state restored its oppressive grip on the Northern Tamil homeland, the people who chose the Vanni were a people who chose to carve out a new life from nature rather than to return to their ancestral home under repressive occupation.

Like so many people enduring persecution, they chose freedom. They chose freedom above material comfort, liberty over oppression.

But in truth the people of the Vanni chose freedom knowing that it was fleeting, knowing full well that they would be called to defend it with their very life.

And in this freedom they materialized the dream of Tamil Eelam, as it has never before been materialized in this century. This was their gift to us.

When I visited the Vanni in 2004, I saw a land that was beautiful: a land of criss-crossing rice fields, banana and coconut groves. A people who created a surplus of food for export to feed the rest of the island.

In recompense, the unimaginable horror of hunger was to be forced upon this people.

When I visited the Vanni I saw children, as young as seven years old, cycling alone along country lanes. The people of the Vanni did not fear for their children to play outside.

But in 2009, the unimaginable

# The Vanni was not surrendered but defended till it was no longer possible to defend

terror of modern war was visited upon the children of this people.

Two decades after the Jaffna library - with its circa 97,000 books, many of them irreplaceable centuries-old original manuscripts of one of the worlds oldest classical languages - had been brunt down by the Sri Lankan state, the people of the Vanni began to build a new library in its memory.

And they did not stop building. They built all of the material institutions of a nation anew. Everything that I saw in the Vanni was built brick by brick with hope and courage.

Yet it was, as they knew and we all knew, a fleeting freedom opposed by unrelenting menace.

And for this reason, every moment in the Vanni was beautiful. The people of the Vanni had acquired a happiness that is only possible when you know that life is precious and fragile.

They were a people united who lived for each other.

Thus when war came to the Tamil people again in 2008, the Vanni represented hope and freedom.

In the final years as the Sri Lankan army came North there fled before it tens of thousands of Tamil people, converging from every direction into this symbolic centre of Tamil Eelam.

They too chose the hope of freedom over the certainty of repression.

But the promise of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness has been cruelly betrayed.

Because the people of Tamil Eelam, courageous as they were, were forbidden to defend themselves. They were forbidden to acquire arms - and we were forbidden to provide them with the means of defense.

R2P - the responsibility to protect - fell perversely on an Orwellian state that was determined to destroy them. It fell to international institutions that had already been bankrupted by their repeated failures in history - the United Nations that failed in Srebrenica as it did in Rwanda.

R2P, like the UN convention on the prevention and punishment of genocide, turned out to be a cynical and false promise issued by bankrupt institutions.

For the Tamil people, the so-called safe zone on the beach was a cynical and cruel manipulation.

It was a place to which the people could be herded and then destroyed in large numbers so that the surrounding areas could



Jan Jananayagam

be ethnically cleansed.

For the Tamil people, democracy in Sri Lanka is a cynical and cruel promise: a promise collateralised by the morally bankrupt institutions of racism.

For the people of Tamil Eelam were allowed to be murdered and the survivors incarcerated en masse, it was said, so that a new constitutional people can be created from their ashes.

The violent cleansing of the Vanni region and the destruction of everything that the Tamil people had created there was allowed, it was said, so that a new democracy could be built over the very bones of the creators.

In Sri Lanka, where the constitution privileges one language over another, one religion over another, one race over another, one nation over another, the very idea of a single constitutional people is a cynical perversion.

The Vanni was defended till it was no longer humanly possible to defend.

The Vanni was never surrendered.

Those who sacrificed their lives in the Vanni epitomized the fundamental values of the millennial old Tamil nation - the values of courage, duty and truth. This is their gift to us: a gift that will live in eternity.

The Thirukkural says:

"Anpillaar ellaam thamkkuriyar Anupudaiyaar enpum uriyar pirarrku"

In English, the Thirukkural says: "The unloving belong only to themselves, but the loving belong to others to their very bones". Those who made their last stand for freedom in the Vanni did so in the hope that a new nation may be born in freedom. Their gift to us is to remind us of the core of our own being.

So yes we must seek justice.

all have the right to the pursuit of happiness.

The people of this great democracy have fought and died to implement this promise - in Gettysburg and Normandy as elsewhere.

But democracy on the island of Sri Lanka cannot be built on a cynical myth. Democracy cannot be built where, a single constitutional people has neither existed nor can realistically be constructed without mass murder; where the proposition that all men are created equal is falsified through every fibre of the state apparatus.

And never again, in the history of mankind must democracy be built on the destruction of a people.

This great American democracy is founded on a promise to those huddled masses yearning to breathe free. In a global era, it is time for that promise to be delivered to the Tamil people.

This must be our pledge to those who built their monument to freedom in the Vanni.

Thamilarin Thakam Tamil Eelam.

Vanakkam.

(Full text of speech as delivered by Jan Jananayagam, activist from UK - at the Vigil held to honor was dead by USTPAC, May 15, 2010)

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# Pilgrimage to Haridwar

by Kanayalal Raina

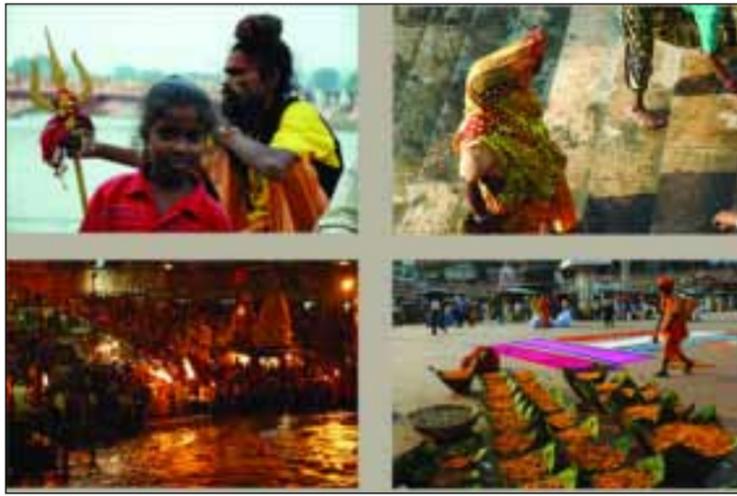
Hindus residing in Canada who have originally migrated from Caribbean, Guyana, Sri Lanka, Fiji and some other countries always desire to visit holy Ganga at Haridwar (India) for a holy dip. The ever-flowing water of the Ganga is the symbol of immortality of the Indian civilisation, culture, tradition and faith. Despite knowing that one day we will have to leave earth, people come here with a hope that they would get amaratva (immortality). This is described by many as faith; some others describe it as belief. I would define it as the desire to shorn oneself of the worldly needs even just for a moment of that monumental dip in the water of "Patit-Pavni Ganga". In abdicating the worldly powers for that one monumental moment, the believer gives himself the chance to experience the power of the nature - the omniscient and omnipresent.

## Kumbh Mela at Haridwar 2010 (March-April)

Over 15 million Hindus from all over the world, estimated to have taken a dip in the holy Ganges during the current Kumbha Mela held at Haridwar from January 14 to April 28, 2010, the second largest in the new millennium. The previous festival held at the same venue in 1998 managed about 10 million pilgrims. Even then, this figure was five times the 2 million pilgrims who journeyed to Mecca for the Haj the same year.

I myself first visited Haridwar in 1964 along with my father and mother on a pilgrimage trip to the river Ganga for the holy dip. I returned back to Ganga river along with my father and other family members after 20 years, this time to immerse my grandmother's ashes in the holy Ganges. Decades later again I visited Haridwar to immerse my mother's ashes. Few years later again I returned to immerse the ashes of my Chacha Ji & Chachi Ji and then of my brother-in-law and finally of my own father in 2004. Each time as the waves effortlessly lapped up the ashes of our dear ones in the river Ganga, all strings - human and material swept away into timeless eternity.

The knowledge that they have to take leave from world one day and still the faith a devotee has in the holy dip, needs a deeper definition of amaratva. It's probably his or her desire for the immortality of the nature which in the case of Kumbh is symbolised by river Ganga. Kumbh is as eternal as the Ganga and thus a symbol of India's glorious tradition and unparalleled civilisational values. Kumbh acts, to use words of Jawaharlal Nehru from Discovery



of India, like a silken bond that unites a staggeringly diverse country.

Kumbh Mela is held every four years in four different centres in India- Haridwar, Allahabad, Ujjain and Nashik, where nectar drops is believed to have fallen during the struggle between the gods and the demons. Thus the congregation returns every 12 year to a particular centre. This year we had the congregation in Haridwar.

The Haridwar city on the banks of river Ganga in the foothills of Himalayas witnesses the largest ever congregation world over. On the day of first Shahi Snan - the Shivratri Day - over 5 million people took dip in the Ganga river this year as per reports in various Indian newspapers.

After visiting the Kumbh Mela of 1895, Mark Twain wrote: "It is wonderful, the power of a faith like that, that can make multitudes upon multitudes of the old and weak and the young and frail enter without hesitation or complaint upon such incredible journeys and endure the resultant miseries without repining. It is done in love, or it is done in fear; I do not know which it is. No matter what the impulse is, the act born of it is beyond imagination, marvellous to our kind of people, the cold white"

The famed traveller and writer could not have caught the spirit of the Kumbh better. This huge confluence of people - the believers and non-believers, the faithful and the agnostic, the ascetics and the pompous - all charmed and awed by the powers of Ganga river.

Those looking for the origin of the congregation, it can be credited to Sankaracarya, the early medieval period Namboodri sage from Kerala, who played a major role in reviving Hinduism and setting up the four Maths - Badrinath (Uttarakhand), Dwarka (Gujarat), Puri (Odisha) and Rameshwaram (Tamil Nadu).

### Samudra Manthan

The story of the churning of the ocean, called Samudra Manthan, finds mention in the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and in the Puranas--Bhagavata Purana, Vishnu Purana and Matsya Purana, the latter giving more details than any other source. The war between the gods and the demons

(forces of good and evil) goes on perpetually. It is said that while the demons would win the battles, it is the gods who ultimately won the wars, thanks to divine support. One such war took place at the beginning of the creation, in which gods, as expected, were defeated. They approached Brahma, the Creator, for a remedy. He sent them to Bhagawan Vishnu who advised them to churn the ocean, the repository of limitless wealth and take out amrit. Anyone who had a sip of amrit would become immortal.

In this stupendous task, the gods sought the cooperation of the demons who agreed on the condition that they would share the countless treasures that the ocean would yield. With Mount Meru as the post and the Sheshnaag, the serpent on which Lord Vishnu lies, as the churning rope, both the gods and the



Kanayalal Raina

demons set about their task. As the churning continued, the first substances to be released were deadly fumes and gases (Kaalakoot Vish) which Lord Siva consumed to save the world from certain death. The poisonous substance turned Siva's throat blue and resulted in His being called Neelakantha.

After many rounds of churning, the ocean yielded a number of ratnas (jewels), the last of which was Dhanavantari, the great healer who held in his hands the Kumbha (pitcher) of ambrosia. Both the gods and the demons made a dash for the prize item. The battle for acquiring the pitcher of amrit went on for twelve consecutive days and nights, which was equivalent to 12 human years.

At this point of time, Lord Vishnu appeared disguised as Mohini, a damsel of great enchanting beauty. Infatuated by Mohini's charm, the two parties accepted her as the right person to distribute amrit. She seated gods and the demons in separate rows and began with the gods first. Rahu, a demon, sneaked into the gods' row. The Sun and the Moon sitting on either side complained to Lord Vishnu who chopped off Rahu's head with His Sudarshan Chakra. But the demon did not die as he had taken amrit. It is since then that the two parts of the demon, Rahu

## MONSOON FEATURE

(dragon's head) and Ketu (dragon's tail) cause eclipses of the Sun and the Moon, their old enemies by virtue of playing the role of informers. Meanwhile, Jayant, the son of Indra fled with the pitcher containing amrit with the demons in hot pursuit after him. In the resultant melee, drops of the divine ambrosia splashed at the four earthly sites: Har Ki Pauri at (Hari-dwar); Triveni Sangam (Allahabad); Nasik (Maharashtra) and Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh). As only a few drops of amrit fell at the last two places, smaller Kumbha festivals are held there.

In this divine drama, three actors were actively involved. 1) Brihaspati (Jupiter), the preceptor of gods, whose wisdom saved amrit; 2) Surya (Sun), whose rays turned the raw pitcher into a solid one and 3) Chandra (Moon), the main informer of Rahu's action. The three-some determine the occurrence of what has come to be known as the Kumbha Mela. The position of Jupiter in the stellar zodiac fixes the year, the placement of the Sun fixes the month and the position of Moon fixes the tithi (the lunar day) of the festival.

This chase continued for 12-long-years and 12 drops of nectar fell from the pitcher. Of these a drop each fell during the chase at the four places on earth, which in turn became the four centres of Kumbh congregation. The belief being that river during the Kumbh, which is decided by planetary positions, turns into the nectar of immortality cleansing the believers of their sins after the holy dip in the river. Such congregations are embedded in faith.

Senior Tamil Society of Peel, 3085 Hurontario Street. Unit215 Mississauga. On. L5A 4E4

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Application closes on June 4th, 2010 at 3.00 pm. for details

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Secretary-STSP



# JOHN BODDY HOMES PRESENTS 'EAGLE GLEN'



John Boddy Homes has been voted 'Best Builder' in Ajax/Pickering for the thirteenth year in a row for this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has now released its next phase at their 'Eagle Glen' community in Ajax. Located just minutes east of Toronto 'Eagle Glen' 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, semi-detached and townhouses. Homes start at 1,700 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,858 square feet, some with three car garages. John Boddy Homes offers traditional size lots with a minimum of 105 feet in depth and a great selection of extra deep lots, pie shaped lots, walk out basements and a select few backing onto 3.5 acres of mature trees. 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 or second 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 a wide range of upgrade items to select from in order to customize your home. Their high-tech electrical and décor consultants allow homebuyers 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 offering an incentive package including \$5,000 in free upgrades 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 on-site public elementary school, 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 6:00p.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. For more information, please call (905) 619-1777 or visit the website at [www.johnboddy-homes.com](http://www.johnboddy-homes.com).

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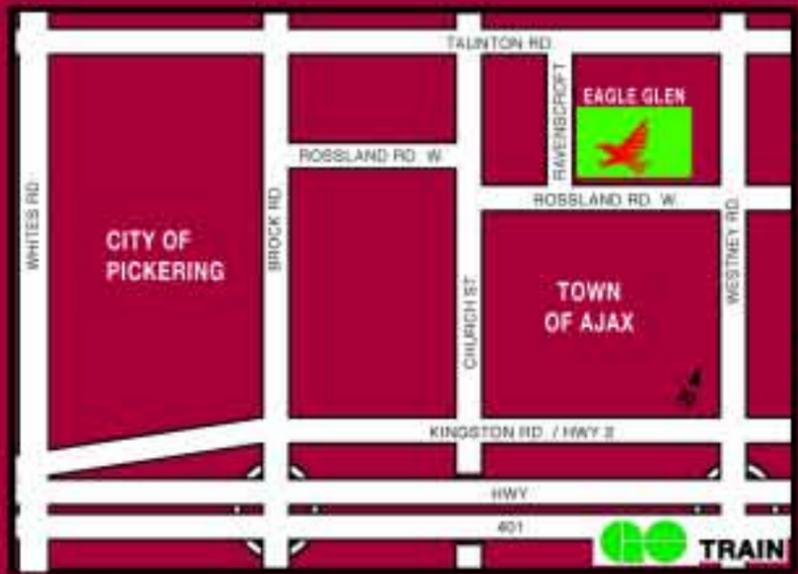
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[www.johnboddyhomes.com](http://www.johnboddyhomes.com)



# South Asian Heritage Day & Awards Ceremony 2010

The annual event of Human Endeavour celebrating the achievements, culture and music of South Asia was held on May 8th 2010 at the Vellore Village Community Centre. The purpose behind celebrating this event is to promote and preserve the South Asian culture and at the same time introduce it to the mainstream community. In addition to the cultural aspect of the event, Human Endeavour recognizes individuals, agencies and organizations for their outstanding achievements and contributions to the community.

Event was attended by a large number of dignitaries including MP Maurizio Bevilacqua, MPP Dr. Helena Jaczek, MPP Reza Moridi, MP Patrick Brown who represented Honorable Jason Kenney Federal Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Regional Councillor Mario Ferri, Regional Councillor Gino Rosati, Councillor Peter Meffe, Councillor Sandra Y. Racco, Councillor Bernie DiVona, Councillor Logan Kanapathi from Markham, Former Mayor Michael DiBiase, Former MPP Mario G. Racco, community leaders and representatives of not-for-profit organizations. Hundreds of community members also attended the event. Event was co-sponsored by Punjabi Community Health Services, Can-sikh Cultural Centre, Thornhill Senior Citizens Club.



MP Maurizio Bevilacqua & Reverend Jim Keenan (New Hope United Church)  
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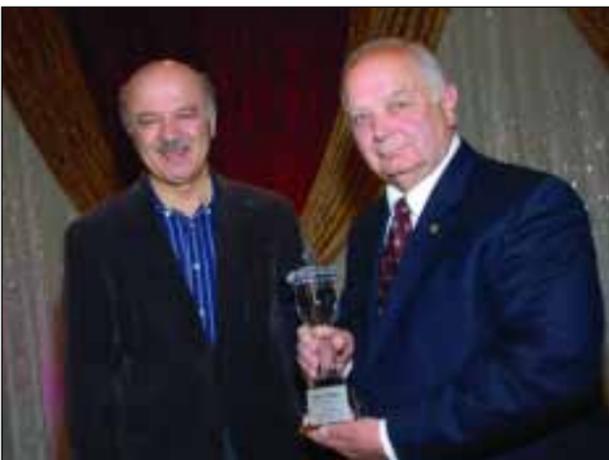
FOR LIFE TIME OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
MPP Helena Jaczek with Kleinberg Church Women (Edna Carrick, Pauline Wheelband (in pink))



MP Maurizio Bevilacqua & Reverend Jim Keenan (New Hope United Church)  
RECOGNITION AWARD 2010 FOR A NEW BEGINNING



Councillor Peter Meffe with Mrs. Arifa Muzaffar (from Mississauga)  
RECOGNITION AWARD 2010 FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP THROUGH MEDIA AM770



MPP Reza Moridi & Peter Vixson (Vaughan Food Bank)  
FOR VOLUNTEERISM & HELPING THE VULNERABLE



Councillor Sandra Y. Racco with Harvinder Bajwa (Brampton)  
Canadian-South Asians Supporting Independent Living  
RECOGNITION AWARD 2010 FOR RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT DISABILITIES



Markham Councillor Logan Kanapathi presenting to Srinivasan Suppiramaniam (Markham)  
RECOGNITION AWARD 2010 FOR LEADERSHIP TO TAMIL COMMUNITY



Regional Councillor Gino Rosati with winners for Spelling Bee completion from Vaughan



MP Patrick Brown, Noor Din and Srinivasan Suppiramaniam

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# Science Minister visits Toronto's Broadband Technology leader CableShopper



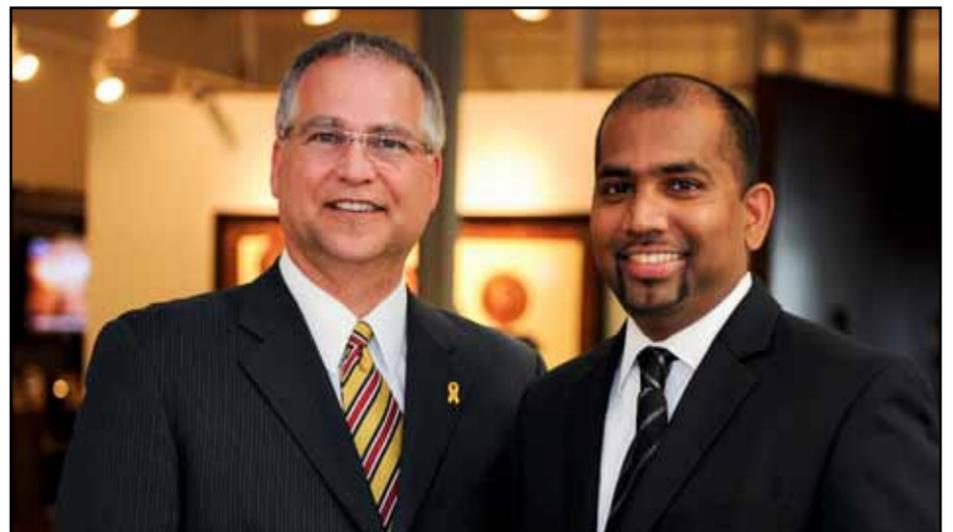
## the CableShopper's site visit and cocktail event with Paul Calandra MP & Hon. Minister Gary Goodyear organized by J11 IT Solutions

The CableShopper Inc. was established in October 1991. Since that time, the company has successfully developed and marketed innovative solutions enabling customers to increase their profits and maintain their competitiveness in the ever growing broadband telecommunications industry.

The CableShopper Inc. is based in Toronto, Ontario, the nation's (Canada's) commercial hub, and home to major TV networks and several broadband service providers. With affiliate branches in all parts of North, Central, South America and Asia Pacific regions, our Toronto office currently conducts business throughout the Americas and services these customers utilizing a large network of suppliers in China, South Korea, Taiwan and other Far Eastern countries.

Some of the photos taken at the visit are given here.

Courtesy: Ninaivukal.com



# HAPPY TO BE HOME AMIDST REBUILDING CHALLENGES

One year on several thousands of people in Northern Sri Lanka are being allowed back into their villages. UK's Department for International Development (DFID) along with several other Non-governmental organizations are helping people in resettling:



Ramachendrum, 34 and Pangagem, 29, pictured inside their temporary one-room shelter, in the village of Adankulam, near Thunnukai. Along with the rest of their family, the couple were displaced for more than 3 years by the conflict in Sri Lanka. Ramachendrum, arrived back in his village in January to find that, like many other people in the area, his home had been destroyed in the conflict. "My brother was killed and his wife and my son were both injured in the fighting. We used to have a two room house, but it was destroyed. We lost everything - even our coconut trees - so now we are starting again."

He used to be a technician in a government veterinary centre but the building where he worked was also damaged in the conflict. Now, with support from the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation, funded by DFID, he is learning how to grow rice until hopefully he can go back to his old job.



Meena, aged 25, stands in front of a UK-funded transitional shelter, being constructed by the UN's Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in northern Sri Lanka. Her original house was destroyed during the conflict. The transitional shelter will be her temporary home as she returns to her village, having been displaced by the conflict for more than 2 years.



Twenty-five-year-old Thayaparan and her six-year-old daughter Mutalakshmi in the village of Kalvallam. "Our life has been very hard, but now we are home we feel reborn", she says. But they face big challenges ahead. Her husband was injured in the conflict, so now he cannot work.

**Pictures:**  
Russell Watkins  
Department for  
International  
Development, UK



People unload what little belongings they have from trucks at a transit centre in the village of Odusuddan



De-mining technicians from the UK charity HALO Trust at work early in the morning, on the edges of a paddy field near Thunukkai



Ravikumar and his family lost everything in the conflict in Sri Lanka as they were displaced repeatedly over the course of two years.

#### Bottom of Form

Ravikumar is happy to be home with his wife and son. They're now living in a transitional shelter constructed with assistance from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Ravikumar is also looking after his sister and her two daughters. His sister has polio and her husband was killed in the conflict.

They've already improvised their shelter from the basic materials provided by IOM. "We had to make more room as there are six of us now" he says.



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# POST-WAR LANKA'S HUMANITARIAN NEEDS MAY BE GREATER THAN AFTER TSUNAMI

By Nita Bhalla

NEW DELHI (Reuters AlertNet) - As Sri Lanka marked the first anniversary of the end of its civil conflict, aid workers are struggling to cope with the humanitarian impact of the war that could be worse than after the 2004 tsunami, a senior U.N. official said.

Almost 300,000 people were forced to flee their homes and seek refuge in camps in the north of the Indian Ocean island during the final months of the 25-year-old conflict between government troops and separatist Tamil Tiger rebels, which ended on May 19 last year.

But as the hundreds of thousands of war-

“ ALMOST 300,000 PEOPLE WERE FORCED TO FLEE THEIR HOMES AND SEEK REFUGE IN CAMPS IN THE NORTH OF THE INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND DURING THE FINAL MONTHS OF THE 25-YEAR-OLD CONFLICT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT TROOPS AND SEPARATIST TAMIL TIGER REBELS, WHICH ENDED ON MAY 19 LAST YEAR ”

displaced return home to find their houses destroyed and their villages and fields mined, the humanitarian community is facing an uphill battle to help them rebuild their lives because of a lack of funds.

“There has been a serious shortage of funding from donors and if the international community doesn't come forward soon, we are likely to run out of money for some key needs by June,” Neil Buhne, the U.N.'s humanitarian coordinator in Sri Lanka, told AlertNet.

“More than 60 percent of the homes have been seriously damaged by the fighting and if you look at the numbers of people involved and the fact that there is little economy in the area, it is at least as bad, if not worse than after the tsunami.”

The Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004 killed 35,322 people in Sri Lanka alone and displaced over half a million.

Around 120,000 buildings on the island were destroyed by the waves and the cost of rebuilding has been estimated at \$2.2 billion, according to the government, the U.N. and international aid agencies.

The U.N. says it needs \$337 million this year to help people returning after the war to rebuild their homes, clear areas scattered with unexploded ordnances and mines and restart livelihoods by providing seeds for farmers and boats for fishing communities.

There are also around 80,000 people still in camps who need basic provisions such as food and water as well as health, education and sanitation facilities.

But Buhne said so far donors have provided only \$80 million - about 24 percent of what is needed - and while programmes are continuing now, they are at risk of being interrupted or stopped.

“We are worried that, for various reasons,



Flour distributors: inside the camps

Photo courtesy: www.irinnews.org

the international community is losing interest in Sri Lanka just at a time when we really should be consolidating the gains of the end of the war,” he said in an interview with AlertNet by telephone from Colombo.

“People don't see it as burning an emergency as it was last year because you don't have these terrible scenes of people fleeing the fighting and living in huge numbers in overcrowded camps, but the needs are still huge.”

Donor fatigue, said Buhne, is also a factor with countries already stretched due to high budget deficits as a result of the financial crisis.

This has forced many donors to fund only the more severe emergencies such as the earthquake which struck the impoverished Caribbean island of Haiti in January.

Some aid workers add that the Sri Lankan government's strained relationship with foreign donors last year - when aid workers and journalists were expelled for being critical and visas for diplomats were refused - has also made some donors wary of dealing with the country.

According to Buhne, the lack of aid is already taking its toll on those who need it most.

The U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR), which was providing a shelter grant of about \$200 per household to returning communities to help them restart their lives, ran out of funds in March, before restarting again with special U.N. funding.

Many aid agencies working in the camps have had to stop relief work, leaving tens of thousands with less water and food provisions as well as adequate sanitation services.

The U.N. has been forced to draw around \$14 million from its Central Emergency Response Fund with which it is currently running most of its key humanitarian pro-

“ IF PEOPLE RETURN TOO SOON BEFORE AREAS ARE PROPERLY DEMINED, THEY COULD BE PUTTING THEMSELVES AT MORE RISK THAN IF THEY WERE TO STAY IN THE CAMPS AND THAT IS A SERIOUS CONCERN ”

grammes, said Buhne. But this will also be used up within the next two months, he added.

This will mean returning populations may, by July, have no cash when they reach home.

Demining agencies will also be unable to finish clearing agricultural land before the monsoons due in late September, leaving communities unable to cultivate crops and start earning any income.

Aid shortages would also lead to deterioration in the conditions in camps and could force large numbers of people to leave and return to areas which were not ready to receive them.

“If people return too soon before areas are properly demined, they could be putting themselves at more risk than if they were to stay in the camps and that is a serious concern.”

## India expected to record 7.9 pc growth this fiscal: UN



The United Nations has projected a growth of 7.9 per cent for India in the current fiscal as it hailed the country along with China for leading developing nations to recovery from the worst economic downturn since World War II.

In its 2010 World Economic Situation and Prospects report, the world body has predicted that the global economy will grow by three per cent this year and then by another 3.1 per cent next year.

The report of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) noted that the global economy is slowly rebounding from the worst of the recession but said most of the developed economies remained “lacklustre” and could not provide “sufficient impetus to the global economy.”

# Sri Lanka's Vindictive Peace

by Soma Ilangovan

"A year after the final battle against the Tamil Tigers ended, the war is far from over. An onslaught escalated as a shooting war against rebels has now changed to a war of attrition against Tamil Society at large," writes Dr. Soma Ilangovan of Pennsylvania, USA.

Dr. Soma Ilangovan, a disciple of Periyar and The Dravidian Movement, is a member of the Tamil American Peace Initiative, a group of Tamil Americans formed to advocate for lasting peace, justice, democracy and good governance in Sri Lanka.

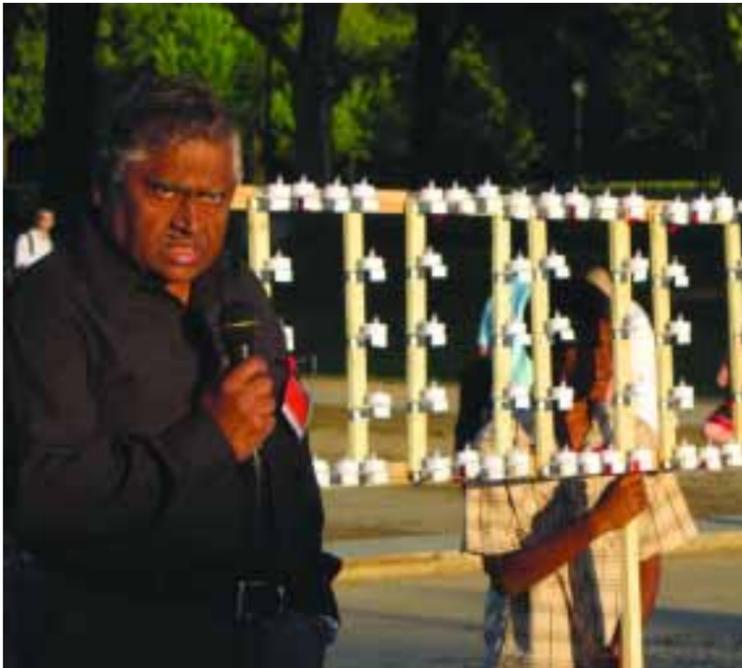
Dr. Ilangovan wrote the following write-up marking the first anniversary of last year's escalated war in Sri Lanka North-East. This article appeared in the influential Washington DC based-US magazine "Foreign Policy" as well:

Last May, Sri Lankan soldiers captured the final piece of land held by the separatist Tamil Tigers, killing hundreds of rebel fighters, including the group's leader, and definitively ending a 26-year civil war that claimed as many as 100,000 lives.

On May 19, the first anniversary of the war's end, however, there is little to celebrate. As many as 93,000 Tamils remain in detention camps and transit centers, while 11,700 more (of which 550 are children) are being held as ex-combatants without charges, denied access to an attorney or their families. Conditions in the camps and prisons are appalling, with human rights groups documenting cases of torture and rape, in addition to poor housing, health, sanitation, and education facilities.

This is not what peace is supposed to look like. And the centers and camps are only the most visible symptom of the Sri Lankan government's apparent disinterest in genuine reconciliation. Far from ending the root conflict, the end of fighting has left the island as ethnically divided as ever, undermining the prospects for a durable peace and regional stability. In many ways, Sri Lanka has simply traded the horror of war for conflict of another, more tedious, continuous sort: a two-tiered society in which Tamils are kept at the bottom.

The evidence is everywhere. Outside the detention and transit centers, there has been little significant reconstruction or development in the Tamil regions of the country. Citizens believe that vital aid to rebuild war-torn communities is being siphoned by the government for its own budget priorities, including investment in



**Dr. Soma Ilangovan, a disciple of Periyar and The Dravidian Movement addresses the gathering in Washington DC on May 15th at the Vigil commemorating the "40,000 civilians killed last spring as the war ended in Sri Lanka".**

tourist projects in the former war-zone. More than 1.5 million landmines contaminate the north of the country. Few job programs have been launched, and infrastructure has been neglected, leaving many Tamils unable to return to communities where homes, schools, hospitals, businesses, and churches were destroyed. Land seized during the conflict has not been returned, and fishing rights have not been restored.

More ominously, President Mahinda Rajapaksa's government has made no headway in advancing the essential freedoms and political reforms necessary for true reconciliation, like political power-sharing and decentralization. Such changes could help eradicate the Tamil disenfranchisement that inspired the insurgency in the first place, for example by giving the Tamil-dominated north a stronger voice in the country's government.

But instead of launching those sorts of conciliatory programs, as Rajapaksa promised he would do in his successful reelection campaign in January, the government has done exactly the opposite. After the election, Rajapaksa's administration arrested his opponent and accused him of plotting a coup. The government continues to intimidate the press and restrict freedom of movement and speech. It is discouraging Tamils from returning to their homelands and instead pushing the resettlement of majority Sinhalese in the north and east. In short, the policy smacks of an official campaign to engineer the island's demographics and diminish the Tamil culture. Instead of ending discrimination, the government's actions too often institutionalize it.

What Rajapaksa doesn't seem

zens, and when hope and prosperity are open to everyone. That opportunity is open to Rajapaksa today, but he shows few signs of taking it, or of amending the decades-long policies of marginalizing Tamils.

Take the Rajapaksa government's intention to establish a Commission on Lessons Learned and Reconciliation, for example. This will only be worthwhile if it is independent, impartial, fully funded, and empowered to investigate war crimes. And the chances of that, in such a climate, are slim. It must have a mandate to uncover the truth and hold people accountable, or it risks being a whitewash commission.

In the meantime, it is urgent that the international community not write off Sri Lanka as a closed book. Its message instead to Rajapaksa must be clear: The time to act is now; he must rise above the ethnic divide and move to transform Sri Lanka, with power-sharing a key component. The United States and other democracies, along with international agencies and NGOs, can



promote this by tying assistance to political progress and investing in much-needed infrastructure projects in predominantly Tamil areas.

The local population must also be involved in these efforts. That will help develop a skilled labor force and encourage Tamils to see the government as their ally in reconstruction and good government. The Tamil diaspora can contribute its energy, expertise, and resources to this effort, if just conditions are created on the island.

But as long as tens of thousands of Tamils are detained and hundreds of thousands more are neglected, there will only be rancor, not reconciliation. Many will believe that the government has gone from a shooting war against the rebels to a war of attrition against Tamil society at large. The world community needs to step up and seize the moment, showing people everywhere that wars are won by the peace they create, not by the battles that end them.

## Requirements for reconciliation to face future challenges

*Full text of media release by National Peace Council of Sri Lanka, Colombo*

President Mahinda Rajapaksa has appointed an eight member Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission to report in six months on the lessons to be learnt from the events in the period, Feb 2002 to May 2009, their attendant concerns and to recommend measures to ensure that there will be no recurrence of such a situation.

In view of the short deadline given to the Commission, the National Peace Council believes that a focus on the period after January 2008, when the war increased in intensity, can be more helpful to the government in dealing with issues of human rights in the last phase of the war about which several international organizations and governments have been expressing their concerns.

The National Peace Council is aware of the fact that a great deal of literature is available on the period of the Ceasefire Agreement from February 2002 to January 2008. This information could possibly be collated by a group of professionals to come up with recommendations that which can form the basis of national reconciliation as given in the mandate for the Commission.

There could also be a survey that covers the different war affected areas and all ethnic communities and ascertains the number of deaths, total and partial dis-

ability, number of houses destroyed, number of public establishments, places of worships, schools, public utilities such as water and electricity destroyed by war, the total cost of the war and the circumstances under which such incidents took place.

Interviews with the war affected people, ascertaining their views and listening to their stories can be a healing exercise in addition to finding out the true state of affairs. An effective response would be for the government to ensure a situation on the ground that convinces the affected victims of war that their grievous losses are acknowledged, needs are met and justice is done.

There are many Non Governmental and civil society groups including the National Peace Council that are already endeavouring to promote reconciliation and could be invited to join in a credible process of fact finding, healing and reconciliation.

We believe it is unfortunate that at the very time the government has appointed the Commission on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation the situation in the North and East, particularly in Jaffna, should be deteriorating in terms of human security. There is once again a heightened presence of security forces on the streets and a revival of fears of people of kidnapping and killings by unknown groups. Much of what happened in the past, and is continuing to happen, is shrouded in

mystery and secrecy. The government needs to put an immediate stop to this type of activity and demonstrate its seriousness about lessons learnt and reconciliation.

For reconciliation to become a reality, the war affected people must feel safe to articulate the true position based on their own experiences of suffering and losses. They should also feel that the government trusts them and considers them to be an integral part of the polity. Government spokespersons have said that they will be emphasising indigenous values and experience in coming up with its findings and conclusions. If indigenous experience is taken into consideration, it needs to be based on trust in the ethnic minorities and in doing justice to them and enable them to live in safety and dignity in their own areas of habitation. Peace and confidence cannot be borrowed but is built on unbroken trust.

(The National Peace Council is an independent and non partisan organisation that works towards a negotiated political solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. It has a vision of a peaceful and prosperous Sri Lanka in which the freedom, human rights and democratic rights of all the communities are respected. The policy of the National Peace Council is determined by its Governing Council of 20 members who are drawn from diverse walks of life and belong to all the main ethnic and religious communities in the country.)

# CANADA'S MINISTER OF FINANCE POINTS TO GROWING TIES WITH INDIA DURING VISIT TO MUMBAI

In a speech to the Confederation of Indian Industry in Mumbai, India, recently, the Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance, highlighted the strengthening bonds between Canada and India and the significant contribution India can make to efforts by the G20 to ensure a sustained global recovery.

"India is a country with growing influence on the global stage," Minister Flaherty said in prepared remarks. "You have weathered the economic storm with a resilience traditional economic powerhouses couldn't match. India has a tremendous stake in ensuring that those countries that helped spark the crisis eliminate the policy errors that stand in the way of long-term stability. Your country's continued leadership will be crucial to making 2010 a historic year."

Minister Flaherty's Indian visit occurred a month before G20 leaders meet in Toronto for a summit aimed at securing sustainable and balanced economic growth, maintaining momentum to complete financial sector reforms, strength-

ening international financial institutions and promoting increased trade and investment. In his address, the Minister noted the continued partnership between Canada and India in the global crisis response, which includes co-chairing the G20 Working Group on Enhancing Sound Regulation and Strengthening Transparency and the Working Group on the G20 Framework for Strong, Sustainable, and Balanced Growth.

Minister Flaherty noted that trade between Canada and India has increased by 70 per cent since 2004 and that two-way foreign direct investment reached record levels last year. These ties were illustrated in Mumbai during meetings between senior officials of major Canadian financial institutions and their Indian counterparts, who are cooperating to make inroads in India's rapidly growing financial sector. Minister Flaherty said that India's interest in Canadian financial institutions is a further example of the strength of Canada's financial system, which has been repeatedly

cited as a model for other countries and is considered the world's soundest by the World Economic Forum and Moody's Investors Service.

The Minister also highlighted Canada's many advantages, which are creating trade and investment opportunities in Canada:

The best fiscal performance and the strongest economic recovery in the G7, according to the International Monetary Fund.

An overall tax rate on new business investment that is the lowest in the G7 and below the average of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The elimination of tariffs on manufacturing inputs and machin-



Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty visited the offices of SunLife in Mumbai, India, on Tuesday, May 18, 2010.

ery and equipment, making Canada the first G20 nation to allow manufacturers to operate free of tariff costs.

During his visit, the Minister also

met with Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, G20 Sherpa Montek Singh Ahluwalia and key business leaders.

[www.fin.gc.ca Press Release]

## In Tamil Nadu: Telemedicine Transforming Rural India

by Linda Blake

Eye doctors in India are now able to treat patients in remote villages thanks to a new wi-fi video conferencing network.

In this eye clinic in Andipatti village in Tamil Nadu state, patients are seeing things a little differently.

Patient Rajamanickam complains about an eye injury.

And 15 kilometers away, an ophthalmologist at the Aravind Eye Hospital in the city of Theni diagnoses and treats him. Both are connected through an inexpensive wi-fi video conferencing network.

It is called "telemedicine" and it is increasing access to care in a country that is home to the world's largest number of blind people.

Eight vision centers have opened over the past six years in Theni district.

The centers are run by an ophthalmic assistant who is trained to conduct a full eye examination, administer diagnostic tests, treat simple ailments and prescribe glasses.

A doctor at centers as far as 150 kilometers away gives the final word to villagers.

"It is a useful instrument for the villagers. We can actually talk to the doctor directly from here," said Rajamanickam.

Rajamanickam normally would spend a full day traveling to the Aravind Eye Hospi-



tal. Instead, he traveled only three kilometers by local bus to this vision center in his village.

His exam cost about 50 cents, half what it would cost at the hospital. He saved \$2 on transportation which he says he can now use for medicines.

The assistant also found a cataract in Rajamanickam's eye, which will require sur-

gery at the hospital. Doctors say this early detection has prevented Rajamanickam from becoming blind.

Under the World Health Organization (WHO) 2020 initiative, India has pledged to eliminate avoidable blindness in 10 years.

The WHO reports that about a third of the world's 45 million blind people live in India.

And the majority of causes such as cataracts and diabetes are treatable.

Aravind Eye Hospital has conducted mobile eye camps in villages across Tamil Nadu over the past two decades. Eye doctors have administered daylong screenings to roughly 750 patients each year.

Now, with the vision centers in place, doctors are treating an average of 5,000 patients per center per year.

Each center is connected to the main hospital by video towers, designed with the help of students at the University of California Berkeley in the United States. The towers cost \$2,200 to set up, but very little to operate.

Dr. P. Namperumalsamy is chairman of Aravind Eye Hospital. He says the scarcity of doctors in India makes video treatment essential. "You may say that you're not touching the patient, you're not talking to the patient, but it's all the more better. If left alone, what they do is will put native medicines or some unwanted medicines and spoil their eyes. This is better than that, and we can advise them the proper medicine for treatment," said Dr. Namperumalsamy.

The Indian government plans to set up 20,000 more rural vision centers in the coming years. [VOA News]

## Britain's Immigration Cap Could Affect Poor Countries

By Selah Hennessy

Britain's new coalition government is pledging to put a cap on the number of non-EU immigrants allowed into Britain. Some people believe it's what the country needs to curb over-population. But, others say it could hurt British business as well as the economy of some of the world's poorest countries.

The Queen of England announced the new immigration policy when she opened parliament.

"My government will limit the number of non-European Union economic migrants entering the United Kingdom," said Queen Elizabeth II.

The new government has not yet said what that cap will be.

But with around seven million people living in Britain who were not born here, it says immigration is too high and must be curbed.

Priti Patel, a Conservative Member of Parliament, says Britain's last government did not do enough to limit the number of immigrants. Now, she says, a cap is what's needed.

"I think it's long overdue to be honest," said Priti Patel. "Immigration has been out of control over the past 13 years. We've had ridiculous records of immigration. We've had ridiculous scenarios where we actually didn't

know who was coming into the country numbers wise and who was leaving. I think it's about time we had a sensible and pragmatic policy on immigration."

But Laura Chappell from the Institute for Public Policy Research says a cap is not realistic.



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, May 25, 2010- Photo: AP

She says a limit on the number of immigrants coming into Britain could hurt British business.

"If it's say 90,000 people and by September that cap is filled, are the government really going to turn to the football clubs that want to sign the next Didier Drogba and say no, we've got our 90,000 immigrants?" asked Laura Chappell.

And immigrants are good for Britain. Chappell says they pay more taxes and take less benefits than the average British citizen.

Perhaps more importantly, she says, migrants help their home countries. They bring new skills and resources with them when they return home and while abroad send money back that develops local economies.

"If you're a family and someone from your family has migrated, you'll be wealthier, but you're also, for example, more likely to start a business, so employ other people in the local area and so the benefits spill over and benefit whole communities and societies," she said.

Her organization, the Institute for Public Policy Research, has carried out research over the past four years, surveying 10,000 households in seven countries to see how they spend their money. What they found is that on the whole in households where someone has im-

migrated there is a better standard of living.

In Jamaica, each returned migrant in a household increases spending on healthcare by more than 50 percent. And in Ghana, households with an absent migrant spend over \$100 more on education each year than those without.

Joyce Newton moved from Ghana to London over eight years ago. She says the money she can earn in a few hours in Britain can go a long way towards helping her family back home.

"Even as little as 20 pounds [\$30] is almost 500,000 cedi in Ghana, which is a lot of money to help to do something good," said Joyce Newton.

She says the money she sends home helps pay to educate her siblings.

"You save a little, send a little to the home, so that they can help out with the other kids who are also coming up to get to a better standard because now at least schooling and stuff like that, it's not free as you get here, everything has to be paid for," she said.

The new coalition government says it will honor Britain's aid commitments to the poorest countries in the world. [VOA News]

# Fifth Annual Tamil Studies Conference

## May 13-15, 2010 held at University of Toronto

by Arun Senathirajah

The fifth annual Tamil Studies Conference was organized by the University of Toronto and the University of Windsor, and held at the University of Toronto from May 13 Thursday and May 15 Saturday. The theme of this year's conference is, "Constructing Tamil Worlds: Circulation, Marginality and Plurality" which offers an occasion to connect with stakeholders working in the community and region, from a broad range of issues that examine the ways in which Tamil Worlds are constructed through the movement of ideas, bodies, traditions and histories. Over 50 presenting academics, artists and activists from different disciplines participated in

the two day conference to explore perspectives on contemporary Tamil politics, culture, art and worldviews, both in the Diaspora and in South Asia.

The conference has brought together Tamil Studies scholars, artists, writers and activists from North America, Central America, Europe, South Asia, and Australasia. Over 70 presenters from disciplines and fields ranging from Anthropology, Archaeology, Art History, Dance, Diaspora Studies, English, History, Journalism, Labour Rights, Literature, Music, Religion, Sociology, Theatre Studies, Visual Arts and Women's Studies have presented papers.

Academics, artists and

activists were received at Munk Centre of the University of Toronto on Thursday, May 13, 2010. Plenary speakers were Sanjay Subrahmanyam who holds Navin and Pratima Doshi Chair of Indian History at University of California in Los Angeles and Prof. Raj Gauthaman Head of the Department of Tamil, Kanchi Mamunivar Centre of Post Graduate Studies in Pondicherry. Sanjay Subrahmanyam delivered the speech on "The First Tamil Diaspora: Tamil Merchants in the Indian Ocean before Colonialism" Sessions for 14th and 15th May were organized into three sessions and the sessions were further grouped into three different panels in order to get engaged



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into the research studies concurrently. Given below are the sessions and panels that took place.

The annual conferences have the following goals:

" To stimulate the development of Toronto as an important centre for Tamil Studies in North America.

" To strengthen the engagement of the Toronto Tamil community with both the University of Toronto and the academy of Tamil Studies scholars in North America.

" To provide North American scholars with a regular opportunity to present their work before their academic colleagues and

informed members of the Tamil community.

" To introduce students in Toronto to the diverse disciplines of Tamil Studies and the scholars pursuing them in North America.

" To enable scholars working on Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka to engage with each other's work and to develop a more comparative approach to the study of these Tamil regions.

" To make the Tamil diaspora an important subject of academic study and engagement.

To publish selected conference papers.

# CIBC launches new contests and promotions in celebration of broadcast sponsorship of the 2010 FIFA World Cup

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### BOOK REVIEWS - By Siva Sivapragasam

# Heart Chakra

By Pramod Kandananaratchchi & Sampath (Sam) Dissanaiké

The thirty year old prolonged war in Sri Lanka has brought out hundreds of articles and books over the period describing various aspects of the war." Heart Chakra" is different in a sense that it is a novel. It is a political, romantic novel of the story of a one man's pursuit of happiness. It describes the tortuous journey that he undertakes from the citadel of Kandy to the city of Toronto in Canada.

The novel chronicles contemporary Sri Lanka- a country that witnessed a brutal war for thirty years. The novel portrays love and compassion in a human heart and also the short comings of human nature. The idea in the novel is to make a contribution for a reconciliation between the two communities.

The experiences of the main character in the novel unravels the ugly realities of

one of Asia's longest running conflicts but also the fascinating nature of the human mind and behavior. The authors point out the desperate need for an honest dialogue between the two communities which would ultimately result in both taking responsibility for the future of the country. Their wish is that the book will make a small contribution towards this endeavor. The novel is authored by two persons-Pramod Kandananaratchchi and Sampath Dissanaiké. It is written with the potential of love in human heart kept alive,so the book is titled Heart Chakra.

The authors also hope that the thousands of wandering souls in the Wannu will soon be resettled with dignity and care in their former homes.

The book is available globally in paperback edition.

# Secret Daughter

By Shilpi Somaya Gowda

Secret Daughter is a novel by Toronto raised author Shilpi Somaya Gowda and is a moving story set against the backdrop of India and speaks of the emotional terrain of motherhood, loss, identity, love, as witnessed through the lives of two families- one Indian, one American- and the child that indelibly connects them.

It is a well crafted story that tackles various issues including inter-racial marriage, adoption, differences in culture and the historically valued concept of sons over daughters, in India. The story revolves around a poor Indian couple where the birth mother gives away their daughter for adoption to prevent infanticide because of the concept of families not wanting girls and their preference for sons.

A childless American couple adopt the girl and when the child grows up she attempts to trace her parents to find out

who she is and why they gave her up for adoption. The story moves forward from there. The novel relates a story from the viewpoints of the three females-Somer, Kavita and Asha who have a very strong feeling about motherhood.

The novel does a wonderful job of narrating cultural differences and discrepancies of Indian life, the wide rift between the rich and the poor etc. The Book is easily readable and makes the reader emotional at several points. The novel has all the elements that attracts a reader, specially women. The reader becomes captivated by the variety of characters in the story. Author Gowda writes the story with touching words and gives vivid descriptions.

The themes of adoption and details of Indian culture will certainly make Secret Daughter a best-seller. The book is available through popular retailers and is an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers.

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WORDS OF PEACE

# The Only Reality

These days, many people are anxious about the situation of the world. Maharaji asks, "How are things in your little world?" That world, he says, is the only reality.

"When I say the word reality to people," he says, "they say, 'Don't talk to me about reality. Reality is not good. I might lose my job. This is serious stuff.'"

"That's not the reality that I am talking about. There's another kind of reality. That reality is that you are alive."

To mistake the ups and downs of this world for reality, Maharaji says, is the oldest of traps. "Many, many before me have said, 'This is the grand illusion,'" he says. "Remember one thing about this grand illusion. It looks incredibly real. That's what makes it an illusion. If it did not look real, and you could just see how fake it is, it would not be called illusion. It's the trap of traps, and we fall into it."

"Then we say reality is horrible, but reality isn't horrible. Reality is beautiful. Reality is great; reality is wonderful. You exist, and this is the reality. You breathe, and this is the reality. One more day has been presented to you in which you can consciously think, admire, and appreciate this day called today; in which you can admire and appreciate this moment called now."

The power to appreciate, Maharaji says, is the one thing that does not fade or disappear with age. The question is, what is there that is worth appreciating?

"We use appreciate very loosely," he says. "When people go to a restaurant and their bread is not warm, they say to the waiter, 'I would appreciate it if you could bring me warm bread.' When the waiter brings a cold glass of water, they say, 'Thanks, I appreciate that.'"

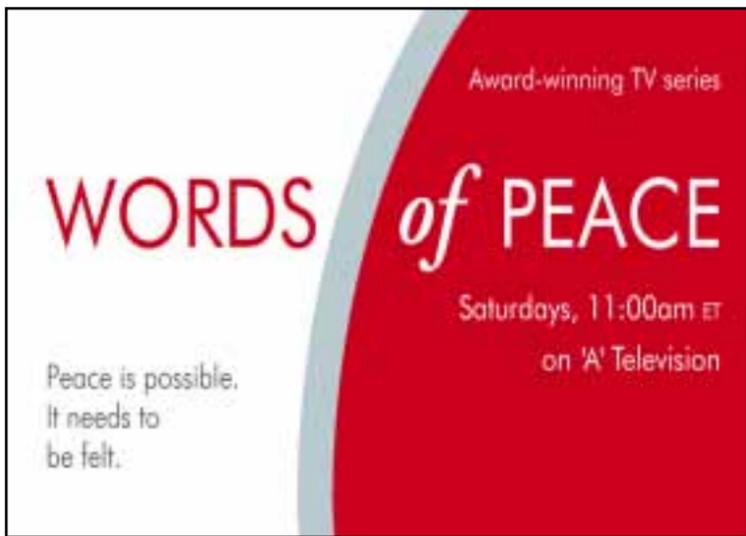
There is something that really is worth appreciating, Maharaji says, and that is the simple but profound fact of existence.

"The moment that you realize you are alive, it is worth appreciating," he says. "The moment you



Since 2003, we have been offering articles on Maharaji and his message of peace in both English and Tamil. This month, we're proud to present the 100th article in this series.

The peace people long for, Maharaji says, is within. He has been bringing this message to audiences around the world since he was a child, and has since spoken to millions of people in nearly 100 countries. His presentations are available in a variety of media in dozens of languages.



realize your desire to be fulfilled, then this life is worth appreciating."

This desire for fulfillment is universal, Maharaji says. It's the driving force behind so much of what people do to be happy. Even if we try to ignore it, it's not going to go away.

"There's nothing you can do to remove that desire to be fulfilled," he says. "Nothing. It is so innate, so basic, so fundamental."

"To me, if people don't think what they're looking for is inside, then they should make sure they have genuine happiness in this life. What's genuine happiness? It's happiness that is not dependent upon other people or other things. If someone needs help finding it, I can help."

"Do you want to know the

truth? The truth has always resided inside of you. Where else would it reside? That which is important to you, you have. Find out what you have, and believe me, you will stop measuring your life by what you don't have. Find that real feeling inside, because what you have is unparalleled.

"That's my little niche. You are alive-make the connection. You have in you the ocean of joy-make the connection. You have in you the real truth-make the connection. You want to be happy? Then that happiness is inside of you."

To learn more about Maharaji, visit:

- www.wopg.org
- www.tprf.org
- www.maharaji.net
- www.contactinfo.net

Among the four aspects of who you are - your physical body, your mind, your emotion and your energy, people generally know emotion as the strongest force within them. This is the reason why emotion is widely used in the religious and spiritual context; and love in particular because it creates a conducive atmosphere around you. The world will work out the way you want it. Let's look at it technically, not in terms of good or bad, right or wrong.

Love essentially means somebody else has become far more important than yourself. That may be distressing - your existence is threatened. You will lose all your freedom, you will lose everything that you have, you can no more do what you want in your life the moment you say "I love you" to somebody. There are innumerable

## Love Kills



**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](http://www.ishafoundation.org) Toronto local contact 1-866-424-ISHA (4742) or email [Toronto@ishafoundation.org](mailto:Toronto@ishafoundation.org)**

problems, but at the same time it's pleasant. It's sweet. It drags you in. It's a sweet poison. A very sugary poison; it is self-annihilating. If you do not annihilate yourself, you will never know love. Some part of you must die. That something else or somebody else has to occupy that space within you which was you all this time. If you don't let this happen, there is no love, only calculation.

What you call as love generally is a mutual benefit scheme. "You give me this, I will give you that, but if you don't give me this, I will not give you that." It's an arrangement. There is still some sweetness in this; mutually, both people are benefited - but it is conditional. If you get very unreasonable as to what you want from it, the other person will slowly back off. Even in your love affair you have to be reasonable. But devotion is love unreasonable. There is no reason - it is one-sided madness. That is the beauty of loving God because you don't have to have a relationship - you can just love. And if you have a relationship, it's all on your terms...

So love is self-annihilating because your personality, your likes, your dislikes - everything you are willing to surrender when you really



love somebody. When there is no love, people are rigid. When suddenly they fall in love with someone, they are willing to twist themselves any way they need to, which is a fantastic spiritual process because you are becoming flexible.

So love is definitely self-annihilating; that's the most beautiful part of it, as long as you don't handle it as a deal. We have formed a variety of relationships in our lives: family relationships, spouse relationships, business relationships, social relationships, variety of relationships to serve different needs of our life. I am not saying there is no expression of love in these relationships. There is. It should be there in everything that you do. Every action can be conducted lovingly. But when we are talking about love as a spiritual process, as a process of self-annihilation, when we use the word "annihilation", it looks like a negative word.

Whether you call it annihilation or liberation, whether you call it destruction or Nirvan, when we say, Shiva is a destroyer, we are saying he is a compulsive lover. Love is not necessarily self-annihilation, it could be just annihilation. It all depends whom you have fallen in love with. So he destroys you; because if it doesn't destroy you, it is not a genuine love affair. When I say "destroy you", it doesn't mean destroying your home, your business or this or that. When what you call as "myself", your rigid personality is destroyed in the process of loving, that is self-annihilation.

Your ways of thinking, your ways of feeling, your likes, your dislikes, your philosophies, your ideologies melt down when you fall in love. That must happen to you; don't wait for another human being to come and do it. Just make it happen for yourself because you don't need anybody to love. You can just love anything. If you simply, deeply create an unreasonable sense of love towards something, you can even do it without any external object, you will see self-annihilation will naturally happen.

If you love a man or a woman or a child or whoever, in the process of loving not just you are getting entangled, the other person also gets entangled. Once the entanglement is mutual, you cannot release yourself when you grow out of it.

The idea of looking up and loving Krishna, loving Jesus, loving something up there or loving a Guru is because you need not have any fear of entanglement from the other side. You love as much as you want; when you grow out of it, there is no resistance from the other side. That is the beauty of devotion. It is a very good preparation for one to become meditative. Without some sense of love in you, without some sense of self-annihilation, you cannot meditate. Some part of you has to be pulled down for you to become meditative. If you pull down the whole of what you call as "myself", you will become absolutely still and transcendent.

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# Did you concur Mr Defence Secretary with the decision to bulldoze LTTE cemeteries?

## An open letter to the Defence Secretary from an ordinary citizen

by Anne Abayasekara

It is with dismay that I read the news report on the front page of The Island of Thursday, May 6th, titled 'TRAITORS SHOULD BE GIVEN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT', with an inset that 'Defence Secretary Rajapaksa says the LTTE rump is exploring every avenue to avenge Prabhakaran's killing on the banks of the Nanthikadal lagoon last May'.

According to that report, Defence Secretary Gotabhaya says anyone seeking to undermine Sri Lanka's sovereignty should be regarded as a traitor. It will be a grave blunder on the government's part for the so-called international community to interfere in Sri Lanka, he says.

The Defence Secretary says that any Sri Lankan promoting an agenda that is detrimental to the country is nothing but a traitor who should be ready to face the consequences..... traitors deserved capital punishment and no one should shed crocodile tears over them."

If he will pardon my saying so, too often, the Defence Secretary seems to speak impulsively not calmly issuing reasoned and well-balanced pronouncements. Some of us ordinary citizens are often left to wonder and feel perturbed at the attitudes that are promoted. All of us are mindful of the debt we owe the President and his brother the Defence Secretary, and even more to the former Army Commander, Gen. Sarath Fonseka and his men, for bringing the long drawn-out and ruinous war to an end.

We can understand - even if we don't go along with it - the triumphalism that prevailed when victory was finally wrested from the LTTE. But is it necessary to demonise the enemy?

A Palestinian peace-maker named Ali Abu Awward observed, in the course of a meeting of 135 Israeli and Palestinian artists to express the benefits of reconciliation, "Everybody wants to see the other side as a devil, to excuse their own behaviour against him, because if we saw him as a human there is a payment, there is a price, and nobody wants to pay the price".

Thankfully, the war is over.

Now is the time for genuine moves towards peace and reconciliation and efforts to bridge the polarization that has taken place between Tamil-speaking and Sinhala-speaking Sri Lankans. Constant fulminations against possible attempts on the part of unnamed, nebulous sources abroad, and against any group or individual who is at all critical of the government may seem like red herrings to distract the people from the realities of our situation here, notably the rising COL, now that the elections are over.

It is the talk of 'Patriots' and 'Traitors', of "those who are for us or against us," that troubles me.

The definition and wide interpretation of the term 'traitor' seems to emanate from a few strident voices and since the popular feeling is that these voices have the backing of the government, a fear psychosis which began quite some time ago, has almost paralysed thinking people



Kopay Maveerar Cemetery, Jaffna, Nov 27, 2004

to the extent that they fear to raise a moderate tone and a reasoned criticism of any sort, publicly. The handful of courageous journalists and writers who still dare to speak out openly and honestly, have sometimes deplored "the silence of the good people". That silence indicates that most people feel cowed and they will not risk any public utterance that might be interpreted by the powers-that-be and their supporters as treasonable.

Increasingly, the impression created is that the government will not allow any dissent and that we must all be 'yes' men and women and forever hold our tongues - whatever the provocation - if we wish to survive in the

present climate.

There are many things that raise concern and at risk of being called a traitor. I'd like to ask the Defence Secretary a question regarding one such issue that disturbs me. It's about those cemeteries in the North where the LTTE honoured their dead.

*Did you concur, Mr. Defence Secretary, with the decision to bulldoze those LTTE cemeteries?*

I visited Gettysburg in 2008 and I was more than ever moved to admiration of that great US President and rare human being, Abraham Lincoln, when I saw how the graves and monuments of the Confederate dead had been allowed to remain side by side in the hallowed ground which also

bears testimony to those of the Union Army who perished in battle.

"Hatred cannot be overcome by hatred," said the Buddha. We can do no better at this point in time than to enshrine in our hearts the concluding sentences of Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural speech: "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."



## LETTERS & OPINIONS

By jjA

The current political scenario in Sri Lanka underlines the need for Tamil unity which has so far been an unattainable goal. Ever since the beginning of parliamentary government in Sri Lanka the minority parties have been at loggerheads. Starting with the Tamil Congress-Federal Party rivalry, the TULF/EPDP Rivalry, the LTTE./EPDP/TMVP conflicts Tamils have always quarreled among themselves instead of joining hands to fight for the rights of the community as a whole. Tamil

## Tamil Unity, NE Development and the Political Scenario in Sri Lanka

leadership has never got the unanimous support of at least a major section of the community. Even now after the parliamentary elections the efforts of the TNA to bring the Tamils under one banner has not borne any fruits so far. There are differences of opinion on the need for a transnational government. Devaneson Nesiiah, senior retired civil servant and son of Kunasekaram Nesiiah, former university don and head of the think-tank of the TULF (who came to Toronto to address the Tamil Conference recently) said, "Tamils in Sri Lanka should get together under one leadership and lobby for their rights. Any amount of diaspora efforts may not bring about the desired settlement." On the other hand, Rantnajeewan Hoole, his cousin

opined, 'The Transnational government will galvanize the support of the diaspora all round the world and help to agitate for the constitutional rights of their compatriots in Sri Lanka.'

The political scenario in Sri Lanka is in favour of the ruling UNFP/Sri Lanka Freedom Party. They are indirectly getting rid of all kinds of opposition to 'Mahintha Chintanaya'. Earlier Rajapakse spoke of getting rid of the executive presidency. But now it appears that he would amend the constitution to aim at a third period as president. The UNFP is even trying to canvass for a two third majority to get six more members to join their fold. There are also agitations by foreign governments like India, U.S, U.K, Norway, Canada and Australia



that the constitution should be changed so that the power is shared with the minorities. Decentralization of power has always been an unreachable goal in Sri Lanka.

The development of the country is not uniform. The north and east had suffered badly due to the ethnic conflict. Large sums of money in the form of aid, donations and international contributions have not brought about significant improvement especially in

the north and east. The damage done by the war has not yet been rehabilitated or reconstructed. So many internal and external plans have been suggested but not many have materialized. Development is the need of the hour. War and violent conflicts should be avoided. News is afloat that there are cases of kidnapping and murder rampant in the Jaffna Peninsula for political revenge. Under the guise of getting rid of the remnant Tigers, innocent people are facing undue harassment and even death. Such tendencies, if any should not be tolerated. This is the opportunity for Sri Lanka to usher in a new era of national reconciliation and reconstruction. Will Mahinda Rajapakse and his government prove itself equal to the task?

# Attitudes must change for true reconciliation to take place

by M.A. Sumanthiran

Honourable Deputy Chairman of Committees, I wish to first thank you for affording me the opportunity to participate and to make my first speech at the very first debate that is being taken up at this 7th Parliament.

The word 'debate' envisages deliberation, exchange of opposing ideas and the ability for one to convince the other and try to change the view point of opposing positions. Unfortunately at this debate, even before the debate begins, this assembly - even this country - knows what the result would be. We deliberate, but at the time of voting it goes on party lines. However this particular motion to extend the state of emergency by the Hon. Prime Minister has another aspect to it, and that is, even if by an overwhelming majority vote, the state of emergency is extended for another month, there are regulations that are made under those emergency powers and the Honourable Minister for External Affairs in his detailed speech listed the changes that were being made to the emergency regulations that have been in force until the 2nd of May 2010.

Therefore with the hope that whatever suggestions that are made at this debate, will be taken into account even in the future when the emergency regulations are amended, I venture to point out three aspects and respond to three matters that the Honourable Minister for External Affairs listed yesterday. He said this is a progressive step. "We cannot do away with state of emergency once and for all; we have to do it step by step". And in that process he listed around 12 items that have been done away with in the emergency regulations of 2005. Unfortunately there are a dozen emergency regulations that are in extant and only one of those has been amended. I wouldn't say that the amendments are cosmetic, but I wouldn't go as far as to say that they are substantial either.

It is true that powers to impose curfew and various other extraordinary powers that had been granted have now been taken away, but more importantly, I'd like to draw your attention to the fact that another set of emergency regulations, namely, Emergency (Prevention and Prohibition of Terrorism and specified Terrorist Activities) Regulations No.7 of 2006 of December 2006, has been left untouched. The Emergency Regulations of 2005 are the set of regulations that ordinarily have to come into force when a state of emergency is declared, and those



Parliamentarian M.A. Sumanthiran, B.Sc., LLB with his wife Ms. Savithri Sumanthiran

are substantially the same as that we had from 1995. But the one that I am referring to now, of 2006 is an extraordinary set of regulations that were brought in, perhaps due to the fact that at that time there was a ceasefire agreement in force; conceded by the government that it was in force at that time, because in January 2008 the government acted under that agreement and gave notice of abrogation.

So in December 2006, matters that were declared offences under the Prevention of Terrorism Act were brought in, through the backdoor as it were, by these emergency regulations of December 2006. There is heavy criticism by various persons on the content of those regulations. They are overbroad, vague; even having dealings with somebody who has dealings with a terrorist is an offence. Advising a person who is involved in terrorist activity is made an offence. That even touches then, the privilege of Attorneys at Law even to advise somebody to surrender.

And that takes me to another regulation, the regulation that provides for rehabilitation of surrendees. I think that it is another draconian piece because it says that when a person surrenders - and the act of surrender is clearly his own confession in content - he is taken for rehabilitation or what is called 'rehabilitation'. Now that goes against all norms: that a person must first be pronounced by a competent court to have committed an offence. Even the Prevention of Terrorism Act has safeguards as to how confessions are made admissible. There are safeguards: you have to make it to a person not below the rank of ASP and so on.

Now where it involves surrendees that regulation has been left untouched, and it was stated in this House yesterday that there are over 11,000 surrendees kept in an undisclosed place. That is why I say, that although the Honourable Minister for External Affairs stated that a big step has been taken in removing various

powers under the emergency, I'd like to think that that is not correct because one out of about 12 regulations has been slightly amended. Now, the power of the armed forces to exercise police powers is another matter which is specifically stated continues to be in force. Now that again is one that is fraught with serious dangers, serious dangers of abuse, even the power to carry out investigation by armed forces, generally the powers that are only left with the police are given to the armed forces and those are to still continue.

The second issue that I wish to highlight is a very unfortunate one and that is this: we can discuss and debate what is printed in Emergency Regulations and what is given to us. But I will give two examples of instances where even the powers given in the Emergency Regulations are not utilized. One is the High Security Zone in Valligaman in Jaffna, the other is the forcible internment of displaced persons in Vavuniya. Neither of these two examples that I cite come under any Emergency Regulation whatsoever. These are two examples only, of flagrant violations, of total illegality. So what is the point, I ask Honourable Deputy Chairman of Committees, of framing regulations, then pruning them down, making announcements that we have done away with draconian provisions, when the Government acts totally outside of even those powers that are given under the Emergency Regulations. There is not a single detention order for those 80,000 odd persons that the government says are still in the camps. An application has been filed in Supreme Court and the Supreme Court perhaps is so embarrassed that for months no order has been given even with regard to Leave to Proceed.

Ordinarily, on the very first day of support order is given either to proceed or it is dismissed. Several dates have been given for the Order and now there is no date at all. It is the first time in the history of this country that

the Supreme Court has not given a date to make an order with regard to leave to proceed. Same with regard to the High Security Zone in Jaffna. An application is pending in the Supreme Court for the last six years.

There has been even a judicial pronouncement that it is illegal and several consequential orders have been made for persons to be resettled in those areas. But apart from a few who were permitted to be resettled in the outer periphery, six years ago, not one single person has been allowed inside, and that is not a prescribed High Security Zone. There are many areas that have been declared under the emergency Regulations as High Security Zones, but not Valligamam, in Jaffna. And over hundred thousand persons are displaced as a result. The point that I am making is that it is well and good to discuss what powers are being removed, how we are going step by step, but all that is irrelevant and all that becomes useless when the government acts totally outside of the powers that are given even through the extraordinary powers of emergency regulations.

And the third issue is with regard to an announcement that again the Honourable Minister for External Affairs made yesterday that His Excellency the President has decided to appoint a Reconciliation Commission, and he added that this Commission would be in the lines of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. We welcome this move. Truth must be told. After all it is truth that will set everyone free. But for truth to be told, as was stated this morning in this house at this debate, there needs to be a change of attitude. For true reconciliation to take place, one must first understand, accept the fact that this protracted war that went on for over 30 years was not merely with a rag-tag army, a group of armed men. The very fact that the Honourable Minister states that reconciliation is necessary is enough proof that the government concedes that as a result of this protracted war communities in this country have been alienated from each other and we need processes for reconciliation.

Now for that to happen attitudes must change as I said and I want to highlight one issue with regard to the announcement that there is going to be a week of commemoration or victory celebration, to mark what happened last year, beginning 12th of May. Last year when there were victory celebrations I happened to be walking on the street when busses from various parts of the



country came to Colombo for the victory celebrations and we were taunted on the streets, like how they do at big matches. I was told 'Eke thamai Appi kiuwe, Apiththeka baha kiuwe' That was the attitude. That was the attitude that hurt, that alienates people. That is not in the spirit of reconciliation that the Honourable Minister of External Affairs stated yesterday. And I hope that even when this week is taken to mark this occasion of the end of an armed conflict, that it is done sensitively. And that the commemoration is as much for the soldiers who died and who were maimed and lost various other facilities, as for every other Sri Lankan citizen who died and lost. Because all those who died in this war are Sri Lankan. All those who lost their limbs, their loved ones, their homes and various other things are all Sri Lankan. And we need to address this occasion with a sense of grief. It is not a sense of triumphalism, of one over the other, but a sense of grief that our country has had to go through this kind of spell, and perhaps a sense of relief that we are now coming out of it. And unless our attitude changes in that direction, we cannot even think in terms of other processes of reconciliation.

Honourable Hisbullah detailed a story yesterday in this House. He told this house that there was a 13 year old person taken into detention, 14 years ago; that for more than half his life he has been in detention and that he has not committed any offence. He doesn't even know why he is in detention. Now this is not an example that I am giving you, it is an example that has been given to this House by a Member of the Government bench. So I take it, that he knows what he is talking about. That must be one of hundreds, or even thousands, that are languishing in detention. How can we then say that we are truly free, when a teenager who is taken in does not even know, according to the Honourable Minister himself, as to why he has been kept behind bars for 14 long years. And the Hon Member stated this but did not say what remedial measure had been taken by the government for this. And unless we are able to address these issues, we will not be able to move forward in this process of reconciliation.

War is a bad thing. After all, in this country and the majority of Buddhist adherents in this country, have a connection with Emperor Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism.

Contd. in Page 40



The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society is becoming a growing community oriented organization in Durham. It is dedicated in making many community landmarks. TCASD made its first baby step on community contribution in 2008 by adopting a park in the City of Pickering.

To continue its commitment of supporting our communities for 2010, TCASD, organized a Charity Gala titled "Lights of Hope" on April 10th to raise funds for the two hospitals in Durham Region. - The Rouge Valley Ajax -Pickering hospital for purchasing the necessary equipments for Women's and Children's Health Program departments and the R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre at Lakeridge Hospital, Oshawa for patient examination room.

The gala was held at the Ajax Convention Center and had guests numbering over 220 people and raised \$10,000. The Gala's special guests included Hon. Mark Holland, MP, Jerry Ouellette, Mayor from Town of Ajax, Steve Parish, Acting Mayor from City of Pickering Rick Johnson, President and CEO from

# Durham Tamil Cultural & Academic Society raises \$ 10,000 for two hospitals in Durham



Rouge Valley Health System Foundation Mr. Chad Hanna, Director of Oshawa Cancer Centre Mr. Vinve Pileggi, Chair of My Health My Hospital Campaign Dr. Boredessa, President of Board of Directors of the Oshawa Hospital Foundation Mr. Chuck Powers, President of Canadian Medical Dental Development Association Dr. Santhakumar, and President of International Medical Health Organization Dr. Lambotharan. The event was both excellent and entertaining. There was a colorful fashion show and a variety of dances held by TCASD youth. The amazing auction and raffle draws helped in raising additional funds. The event turned out to be a truly fun evening for everyone to enjoy!

Dr. Kanna Vela, MC for the evening, created a positive atmosphere. The special guests provided inspiring speeches that motivated the people with hope, spirit and belief. The evening was a great success due to the strong support received from both the hospitals, generous sponsors and donors. The event had the full co-operation of the hardworking

and dedicated youth and members and in addition the generosity and support of the community.

The Association has a programme lined-up for such many more events with a motivation to contribute towards better health care services to the communities in Durham. The Association wishes to express its sincere thanks to the donors, sponsors, distinguished guests, the gala committee, The Rouge Valley Ajax - Pickering hospital foundation, Lakeridge Hospital foundation, the media, Ajax Convention Centre, TCASD youth and all the guests for the success of the Gala event.

**Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham's upcoming Main events**

**June 19th, 2010** TCASD Summer Soccer Camp Begins

For more information and registration please call 416-857-0846

**June 20th, 2010** Competition month

- Math completion
- Essay competition
- General Knowledge competition
- Tamil word competition



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**September 18th, 2010**

**"Believe in You 2010"**

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Seen here are some pictures taken at the Gala Event.

## Attitudes must change...

Contd. from page 39

And if one thinks about that, his conversion to Buddhism was after a war that he won, but through grief that so much was lost during that war. And if Emperor Ashoka's offspring brought Buddhism to this country, and that is our history, as true Buddhists and others who follow various religions who also believe that killing is bad, to simply put it, must grieve over the hundreds and thousands of persons, perhaps, who lost their lives during this 30 year war.

We oppose the extension of the emergency for the reasons that I have stated. Because even the assurance given by the Honourable Minister for External Affairs that these are substantial changes don't convince us. I highlighted some of the provisions that still exist and must be done away with as quickly as possible. I hope that the government will take steps to look at the other emergency regulations in force, particularly the one that was promulgated in December 2006 and take steps to repeal those provisions as well.

Therefore Honourable Deputy Chairman of Committees, while the government takes those steps, I urge the government to not act outside the pale of law, not to act outside the strict provision of the law. The rule of law must prevail. And it was only two examples that I gave where large numbers of persons are affected. And that must be remedied forthwith. If we are to say that we are taking definite, concrete steps to return to normality, then these are some of the essential steps that must be taken, and I hope that the government will do that at least in the future.

And I end with my third point repeating that the process of reconciliation and truth-telling must commence with changes of attitude. And when people do start telling their stories it must be received in the spirit that we ask them to tell their stories. Thank you very much.

(This is the full text of the maiden speech in Parliament by M.A. Sumanthiran the Tamil National Alliance national list MP)

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# Durham Tamils holds a candlelight vigil to remember innocent Tamil victims



Organized by the Durham Tamil Association, local Tamils held a candle light vigil on Friday May 14th 2010 at the Pickering Recreation Centre to commemorate the one year anniversary and remember the innocent Tamil victims of the Genocide caused by the Sri Lankan armed forces in 2009. The vigil was attended by grief stricken Tamils of all ages; toddlers to grandparents. Local media, The News Advertiser appropriately announced to all residents of Durham: "The Pickering Recreation Complex will be full of hope and glowing with candlelight Friday night. The

Durham Tamil Association will hold a candlelight vigil to remember the victims of the genocide in Sri Lanka"

Over one hundred Tamil families in attendance were consoled by all levels of politicians and dignitaries: Several Candidates of Municipal & Provincial elections, School board Trustees, Municipal officials of Ajax & Pickering, Ontario Members of Provincial Parliament, Federal Members of Parliament, a Member of Transnational Government for Tamils, Human rights Advocates, Multicultural Durham, and Baha'i Community of Durham. All speakers sincerely expressed a unity of

common grief and for a unity of action against evil of humanity in Sri Lanka. Mark Holland Hon. MP for Ajax-Pickering who represents a large population of Tamil constituents in his riding repeated his demands that the Harper government should face up to their responsibilities on the humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka, and assured the attendees that he will continue to fight for the rights for Tamils in Sri Lanka. He also welcomed everyone to sign the petition by Durham Tamils: "Sri Lanka should be held accountable for its war crimes against Humanity" and promised to raise the issue in Parliament on behalf of Tamils

Wayne Arthurs MPP-Pickering-Scarborough East, Joe Dickson Hon. MPP-Ajax-Pickering, Rick Johnson Regional Council of Ward 3 Pickering, Hon. Mayor Dave Ryan, Renrick Ashby Councillor Ward 2 Ajax, Maurice Brenner- a well known human rights activist and Candidate for Mayor in Pickering Elections, Roland Rutland coordinator of external affairs for the Baha'i communities of Durham Region and promoter of Multiculturalism in Durham, Mrs. Shashi Bhatia Chair of Indo-Canadian Cultural Association of Durham, Kim Dowds Candidate for regional councillor Wards 3 & 4 Ajax, and

Pon Balarajan recently elected Markham Member of the Transnational Government for Tamils attended the vigil.

Regrets for being unable to attend and continued assurance to help the Tamils in Sri Lanka were expressed by Dan McTeague, Federal MP for Pickering- Scarborough East and Doug Dickerson, Councillor Ward 2 City of Pickering.



DTA's candle light vigil



People who participated in the vigil



Mark Holland Hon. MP for Ajax-Pickering



Mrs. Shashi Bhatia Chair of Indo-Canadian Cultural Association of Durham



Renrick Ashby Councillor Ward 2 Ajax



Wayne Arthurs MPP-Pickering-Scarborough East

# Asian Heritage Day Celebrated in Pickering by DTA

The Durham Tamil Association celebrated Asian Heritage Day in Pickering on Friday 28th. May at the Pickering Recreation Centre with a lively programme consisting of cultural performances.

Among those present was city councillor Mr. Doug Dickerson and his wife. Mrs. Sashi Aravindhan of Arunodhaya Dance Academy

acted as the Master of Ceremonies. Several residents of Pickering and visitors to the Recreation Centre enjoyed the evening's entertainment. Traditional snacks and refreshments were served at the function.

Seen here are some pictures taken at the event.





# Self Help for Trauma

Children and youth are especially traumatic by Natural disasters. Experiencing a dangerous or violent flood, storm, TSUNAMI or earthquake is frightening even for adults, and the devastation to the home and community; can be long lasting and distressing.

The traumatic things that happened to people were overlooked as a possible cause of frightening, distressing, and sometimes disabling emotional symptoms such as depression, anxiety, phobias, delusions, flashbacks, and being out of touch with reality.

In recent years, psychologist, psychiatrist and many researchers have become convinced of the connection between trauma and these symptoms. They are developing new treatment individual and group therapy programs and revising old ones to better meet the needs of children and adult who have had traumatic experiences. Trauma studies show that if a person thought they or someone else were going to die during the traumatic event, that person will have symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.

Some examples of traumatic experiences that may be causing your symptoms include: war experiences, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, neglect, outbursts of temper and rage, your own alcoholism or in your family alcoholism, sickness in your family, physical illnesses, surgeries, and disabilities, Rape or attempted rape, violent crime, earthquake, fire, political torture, airplane crash, manmade disaster, accidents, explosions, child abuse, care taking role in trauma, gang violence, natural disaster, war, witnessing a trauma.

Traumatic experiences symptoms can include: Loosing interest



in your life, feeling separated from others, not experiencing many feelings, feeling sad about what happened, finding the need to talk and talk about the trauma, troubles with intimacy, troubles with relationships, reacting to things that resemble your trauma, feeling like you cannot control yourself, developing an eating disorder, developing a drinking disorder, trouble remembering things, beginning to avoid your life, developing a chemical abuse disorder, being on alert all the time, trouble sleeping, feeling guilty, repeatedly remembering the event, dreaming about the trauma and Flashbacks.

Some trauma experts agree that the psychological outcome of our community as a whole will be resilience. For some survivors, urges to avoid, and hyper-arousal, symptoms of fear, anxiety, re-experiencing, if present, will gradually decrease over time. The number of common strategies

that individuals utilize when coping with extraordinary stress in their lives and while effective at manageable levels of stress, can become unproductive or detrimental when stress reaches overwhelming or traumatic levels. Individuals have their own way of and pace for processing traumatic events, and each individual must listen to and honor his or her own pace and way.

Survivors monitor their reactions and increase the coping strategies that have worked in other stressful situations. An individual with positive responses after a traumatic event indicates that their preferred coping mechanisms. First maintain a view of oneself as competent and a view of others as willing and able to provide support, then focus on the current implications of the trauma and avoid regretting past decisions and actions and when problem-solving, focus on brief time intervals or focus on a larger

time interval to obtain a less devastating picture of the trauma.

The process of converting traumas into growth experiences is usually done by the individual alone, but confidants can also suggest new ways of viewing the situation. It is usually occurs between 2 weeks and 4 months following the stressor and enhance one's ability to cope with subsequent stressors. Usually converting traumas depends more on an individual's psychological resources than on the characteristics of the stressor event and it is characterized by sudden insight and revelation or intuitive, rapid, and sudden rather than being an extended logical thinking process.

Positive coping actions improve things not only for today but for the future as well. Positive coping actions help to reduce anxiety, lessen other distressing reactions, and improve the situation in a way that does not harm the survivor further.

Using natural supports and talking with friends, family and support group is helpful to follow one's own natural inclination with regard to how much and to whom you talk. Learning about trauma and PTSD is useful for trauma survivors to learn more about trauma and PTSD and how it may affect them. The best places to find support is in a specially designed clinical support group that conducting by psychologist, social works or trauma Counsellors. The process of seeking support from other trauma survivors, the survivor may come to feel less alone, feel supported or understood, or he or she may receive concrete help with a problem situation. Being in a group with others who have similar experiences may provide an important opportunity to con-

tribute to the recovery of other survivors of trauma.

Muscular relaxation exercises, breathing exercises, meditation, swimming, stretching, yoga, prayer, listening to quiet music, spending time in nature can be helpful. Relaxation methods can sometimes increase distress by focusing attention on disturbing physical sensations or by reducing contact with the external environment. Artistic endeavors (express feelings in a positive, creative way) can help improve a person's mood, limit the harm caused by PTSD, and can help a person rebuild his or her life. Increasing positive distracting activities help distract a person from his or her memories and reactions. If the trauma survivor feels fearful or depressed, it is important that he or she reach out and telephone a counselor, who can help the survivor turn things around.

When you're not working, you may not feel that you are contributing anything worthwhile. Volunteering in the community is important to feel like you have something to offer to others and that you are making a contribution. One way that many survivors of trauma have reconnected with their communities and regained a feeling of connection and importance is to volunteer (help with community based programs, medical services, literacy programs, community sporting activities).

Exercise can improve self-esteem and help people feel that they have some control in their lives walking; jogging, swimming, weight lifting, and other forms of exercise may reduce physical tension. Exercise activities may also help distract the person from painful memories or worries and thus give them a break from difficult emotions.

"Most people go through life dreading they'll have a traumatic experience. Freaks were born with their trauma. They've already passed their test in life. They're aristocrats."

- Diane Arbus -

Dr. Fonseka - MH clinician  
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# Politics and filmdom inseparable entities in Tamil Nadu

Actress Khushboo joining the DMK highlights the inseparable bond of politics and filmdom in Tamil Nadu which has had actors and playwrights going on to become Chief Minister.

With her taking the plunge into politics recently, the 39-year-old actress has joined a list of celebrities who made use of their silver-screen charm and popularity to garner votes, with veteran actor SS Rajendran first stepping into Tamil Nadu Assembly on a DMK ticket in 1957.

The State is known for its history of actors and cinema professionals joining politics.

Late MG Ramachandran (MGR), his wife Janaki, both actors, his protegee Jayalithaa, a popular actress in the late sixties and seventies, and present incumbent M Karunanidhi, a playwright, have occupied the Chief Minister's chair.

DMK founder CN Annadurai, also a playwright, was DMK's first Chief Minister in 1967. After his death in 1969, Karunanidhi first took over the reins of the state.

Karunanidhi's razor-sharp script against social evils and the dialogues mouthed by 'Sivaji' Ganesan in the 1950s "Parasakthi"

catapulted him to fame, prompting the actor later to take the plunge into politics, serving different parties, including Congress at different times

Karunanidhi, 86, has held the Chief Minister's post for 19 years in different terms.

After his early days as an important mem-



ber of the DMK, Tamil icon MGR later launched his own AIADMK, banking on his popularity that never let him down. Jayalithaa, who also paired against him in a num-

ber of films, has been Chief Minister twice.

MGR's contemporaries-- Rajendran, Ganesan and Padmini were also in active politics at some point of their life.

The next generation of actors were no exception. While Rajnikant openly supported the DMK-TMC (Tamil Maanila Congress) in the 1996 elections which was instrumental in the alliance's massive win against AIADMK, his peer Kamal Haasan had no qualms publi-

“

THE STATE IS KNOWN FOR ITS HISTORY OF ACTORS AND CINEMA PROFESSIONALS JOINING POLITICS

”

cising his left-leaning policies.

Khushboo's entry into politics was in the air for some time as it was widely speculated that she could join the Congress.

Her entry into DMK is seen as an effort by

the party to boost its star campaigners team, ahead of Assembly elections next year with opposition AIADMK banking heavily on their charismatic party leader Jayalithaa to come back to power.

The actress was cleared by the Supreme Court last month of the 22 cases against her for her remarks on pre-martial sex in an interview to a magazine in 2005. Khushboo, who has a considerable fan following in the state with even a temple built for her in Perambalur district, joined the DMK after some parleys, living upto the tradition of actors predominantly preferring one of the Dravidian parties.

Her entry into DMK is seen by political observers as the party's answer to Jayalithaa.

Another popular actor Vijayakant has floated his own party-Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam--and represents Virudhachalam in the Tamil Nadu Assembly while top actor R Sarathkumar is President and founder of the All India Samathuva Makkal Katchi.

Union Minister of state for Social Justice and Empowerment D Napoleon belongs to the DMK. [PTI]

## SHOOTING 'RAAVAN' IN TAMIL AND HINDI MOST CHALLENGING: Mani Ratnam

Unveiling a sneak peek of his upcoming movie Raavan at the 63rd Cannes Film Festival, director Mani Ratnam said that filming both the Tamil and Hindi versions of the movie simultaneously was the biggest challenge in his career.

The filmmaker was present here along with the starcast of the film, which includes Vikram, Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai, to screen the trailer of the bilingual film.

"We shot both versions simultaneously, something I have never done before. This part was my career's most challenging, most difficult and most stimulating. It was also physically exhausting," said Ratnam.

It was taxing for Aishwarya as well, who plays a modern day Sita in the movie and shares screen space with her actor husband in the Hindi version.

"Apart from the intricacies of essaying the Hindi and Tamil heroine all at the same time, the inhospitable jungle terrain where we shot posed its own hazards," he said.

Southern superstar Vikram, who acted alongside Aishwarya in both versions, has dubbed his own lines in Hindi as well as Tamil.

"If Aishwarya could have dubbed for the Tamil edition, why not I for Hindi," he told PTI.

Ratnam's wife Suhasini, Raavan's co-producer and dialogue

writer for the Tamil edition said that the film would help "us understand the grey parts that all of us have in us. None of us is completely white or black".

Praising Oscar-winning composer A R Rahman's music in the film, she said, "It merges beautifully with the story. In fact, the music accentuates the picture. The songs have a great role to play. They take the plot forward." [PTI]

Actors Vikram, Aishwarya Rai and Abhishek Bachchan pose during a photo call for "Raavan", at the 63rd international film festival, in Cannes.



## Suriya starrer **SINGAM** to be biggest Tamil release in U.S.



"Duraisingam is not just about the cop, it's about where he started from, what his culture is, why he came to the city and his attachment to his roots," says actor Suriya about his role in the film

Suriya's 'Singam' will be the first Tamil film to be released on an unprecedented scale across US.

BIG Cinemas is releasing the film in more than 30

screens across 24 locations/cities in U.S. on June 28. These include 10 own locations of BIG Cinemas.

A 'Suriya searches for his biggest fan in U.S.' contest has also been organised



A promotional still from the film "Singam". This Suriya-starrer movie is directed by Hari



"Whether it is for the rural or the urban market, there must be a strong storyline," according to the actor.

by the distributor which began on May 23 and will go on till June 7.

Suriya himself will select the winner, who will get to exclusively video chat with the actor and receive autographed 'Singam' movie merchandise which includes the police uniform and accessories worn by Suriya.

"Singam is Suriya's 25th film. Singam revolves

around smuggling activities taking place in Rameshwaram. Suriya plays a cop after the stupendous hit 'Khaaka Khaaka' and the film is expected to have the right mix of sentiments and comedy like all other Hari films," a Big Cinemas statement said.

Directed by Hari, the film also stars Anushka Shetty, Prakash Raj and Vivek.

[PTI]



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**LETTERS &  
OPINIONS**

# Toronto Group of Twenty Summit, Issues Focused and the Battle over Global Bank Tax

**Arun Senathirajah**  
**MBA Banking Mgmt**

The Group of 20 Summit is going to be held at a cost of more than one billion dollars to the tax payers, on June 26th and 27th Toronto, almost simultaneously G8 meeting to take place at Hunstville, Muskoka Ontario Canada.

## Origins of the G20

The Group of Twenty (G20) forum of finance ministers and central bank governors was formally created at the September 25, 1999, meeting of the G7 Finance Ministers. It was created as a new mechanism for informal dialogue in the framework of the Bretton Woods institutional system, to broaden the dialogue on key economic and financial policy issues among systemically significant economies and to promote cooperation to achieve stable and sustainable world growth that benefits all. Its mandate is to "promote discussion and study and review policy issues among industrialized countries and emerging markets with a view to promoting international financial stability. The G20 is an informal group of 19 countries and the European Union, with representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

## The Group of Twenty (G20) Past Summits

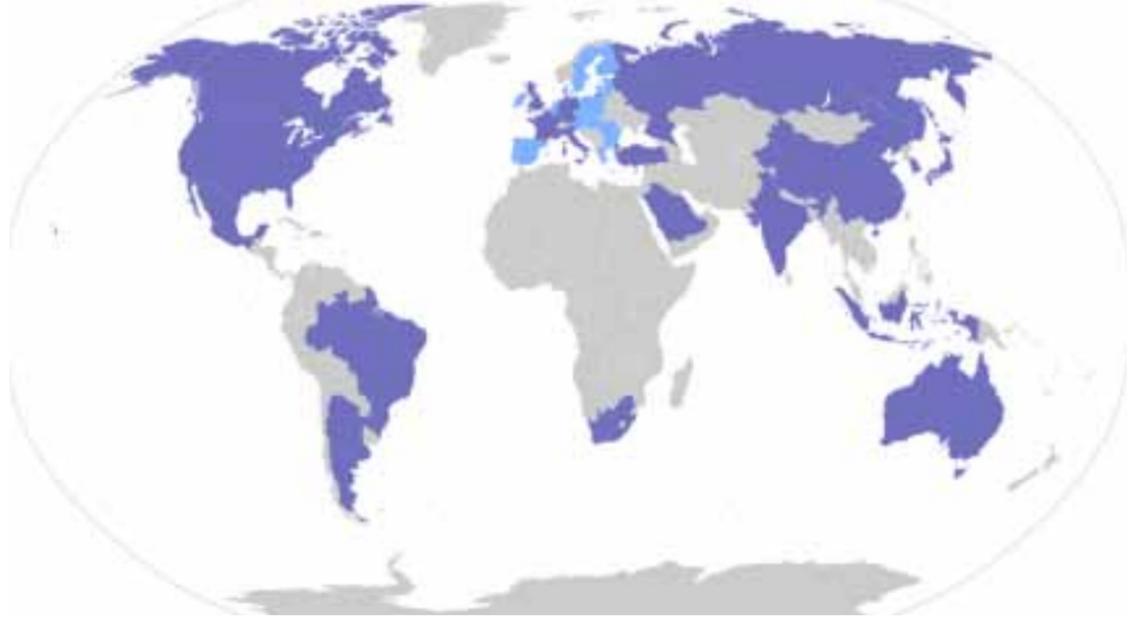
The finance ministers and central bank governors began meeting in 1999, at the suggestion of the G7 finance ministers in response to the global financial crisis of 1997-99. Since then, there has been a finance ministerial meeting every fall. In October 2008, in the aftermath of the financial crisis that began in the United States in September, President George W. Bush announced that he would host a meeting of the leaders of the G20

countries, creating the first ever G20 summit in Washington DC on November 14-15, 2008, to coordinate the global response.

The Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy produced an action plan that outlined measures to stabilize the global economy and prevent future crises. G20 leaders underscored the critical importance of rejecting protectionism and introduced coordinated stimulus packages. Taken together, these actions constituted the largest fiscal and monetary stimulus and the most comprehensive support program for the financial sector in modern times.

The G20 was chaired for its first two years by Canadian Finance Minister Paul Martin. The G20 consists of 19 countries and the European Union. The 19 member countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America and European Union. Other Organizations participating are the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Financial Stability Board and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The chair would rotate among participants with two year terms, and with the initial chairs being chosen from among the G7 countries.

Leaders met a second time in London on April 1-2, 2009. At the London Summit, leaders continued the work that had begun in Washington and announced a historic pledge of US\$1.1 trillion to restore credit, growth and jobs in the world economy. This has included \$750 billion in new resources for the International Monetary Fund, as well as \$100 billion in new lending by the



Multilateral Development Banks and \$250 billion to support trade financing.

Following up on the measures taken in London, G20 leaders met for a third time in Pittsburgh on September 24-25, 2009. The Pittsburgh Summit established the G20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation, giving the group a mandate to continue beyond the current economic crisis. Leaders deepened their cooperation by agreeing to increase the voice of emerging economies in the international financial institutions, while establishing principles for responsible economic activity in the Framework for Strong, Sustainable, and Balanced Growth.

Leaders have agreed to meet again in Canada and Korea in 2010. The G20 Toronto Summit will take place on June 26-27, 2010 and the Republic of Korea will host a G20 Summit in November. The Canadian and Korean summits will provide opportunities for the G20 to follow through on its commitments from previous summits and take action to build a future of sustainable and balanced economic growth.

## Issues to be Focused in the Summit

**International Financial Architecture:** This issue area includes the activities of the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as other international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the Financial Stability Board (FSB) and its former incarnation, the Financial Stability Forum (FSF), as well as the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It includes these institutions' responsibilities such as policies and consensus-oriented activities that help shape and

govern the global financial system. Thus the issue area considers the "financial architecture" built on these global institutions - their institutional role, effectiveness, legitimacy, coordination and lending activities.

**Financial Crisis:** This analysis focuses on the global governance of systemic financial crisis. Such a crisis is defined as a sudden, surprising loss of confidence, liquidity or solvency in private financial institutions, financial markets or governments that the home national governments are unable to control and that thus spreads to other countries in ways that do or might endanger the broader global financial system. A crisis can come in different varieties, especially in the current era of intensifying or "third wave" globalization. This era has brought increased "hot money" flows, credit risk, and transmission of shocks, increasingly sophisticated financial institutions, highly leveraged institutions, and regulatory arbitrage. It has seen not only the old crises brought by government's international payments imbalances but also new crises brought by the private sector fleeing countries in response to the collapse of far-off private sector financial institutions, and thus devastating the economies and societies of the countries they flee. Discussions of regulatory approaches, of executive compensation practices, of exit strategies, are particularly pertinent here.

**Global Imbalances:** Global imbalances are defined here by excessive saving on the part of one systemically significant group of countries or a single country and a corresponding excess in spending by another group of systemically significant countries or single country, causing concern about the financial situation affecting either individual coun-

tries or the global financial system as a whole. The term can also refer to excessive fiscal vulnerabilities and current account surpluses and deficit that threaten global financial stability.

**Reform of the International Monetary Fund:** Reform of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) includes those features that pertain to its governance structure, including IMF voice and vote reform and also mentions of reforming the IMF's executive board. Voice and vote reform includes the voting power allocated to each IMF member, as well as the financial quota shares (input) that each member contributes. This issue area also includes any mentions of the selection of the executive direction. It does not include parallel reforms suggested for the World Bank (or broad governance reform references either to the IMF or the World Bank), nor does it refer to any other features of the IMF's international role such as loans (output) or surveillance activities.

**Capital Account Liberalization:** Capital account liberalization refers to the liberalization of capital accounts and capital movement, specifically with regard to emerging market economies. The definition here excludes the broader area of increasing global economic integration and economic globalization, including capital mobility in the form of capital goods, capital market efficiency and capital flows in general. The G20 finance ministers and central bankers began calling for capital account liberalization in 2000 but ceased to explicitly endorse it in 2004.

**Climate Change:** Climate change includes references to greenhouse gases, global warming, the Kyoto Protocol, emissions and carbon dioxide. It also includes references to the Global

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## LETTERS & OPINIONS

popular headline grabber in Germany, France, Britain and United States to quell public anger over massive chunks of public aid used to shore up banks. Diplomats expect G20 countries to end up tailoring any levy to their national circumstances.

### **An Enhanced BASEL III Capital Adequacy**

Regulators fear spats over a tax will detract the G20 from two harder tasks: finalizing tough new Basel III global bank capital and liquidity standards by year end, and making progress on tackling "too big to fail" banks. "Bank capital is like a train in a dark tunnel -- nobody can see it and when it does come out, it does not capture the public's imagination," a G20 official added. The G20 has agreed that Basel III should be finalized this year and implemented by the end of 2012. A delay in the introduction of separate, tough new bank trading book capital rules that were due in January is a stark reminder of the difficulties ahead, not least from the industry. Leading banks meet in Vienna before the G20 summit and will publish estimates on the impact of Basel III.

### **A Compromise Required for a Radical Change**

Taking coordinated action to deal with "too big to fail" banks will be just as hard, as highlighted by the United States pushing its "Volcker rule" ban on proprietary trading which the EU rejects as a solution. Big banks are required by the G20 to draw up "living wills" or blueprints for speedy wind up if in difficulties but some banks are simply too complex and interconnected to be wound up easily under existing insolvency laws, regulators say. This leaves G20 members with the task of finding enough political resolve to carve up banks into simpler chunks or radically overhaul international bankruptcy laws. Credit rating agencies may come under the lash. Germany wants tougher scrutiny and more competition after Standard & Poor's downgraded Greece's debt to "junk" just as a rescue package was being stitched together. China is keen on making investors to pay for ratings to end a conflict of interest whereby agencies get their income from fees paid by companies whose bonds they rate. We have to wait and see how the tax matter being approached by the G20 members in the summit.

### **Canada's Campaign against the Bank Tax**

Canada mounted a world-wide campaign Tuesday against a global bank tax by deploying four cabinet ministers in far-flung political and financial centres around the world on Tuesday May 18, 2010 in a bid to kill the proposal. They delivered speeches in Mumbai, Shanghai, Washington and Ottawa. The arguments put forward by the conservative government was based on combination of macroeconomic management, regulatory systems, corporate governance structures and banking practices has produced soundest financial system in the world. The Prime Minister Steven Harper insisted "We have our preferred course of action in terms of financial regulations." Prime Minister Stephen Harper said a proposed international bank tax would unfairly penalize well-regulated Canadian financial institutions that survived the global economic meltdown.

The prime minister told a G8 and G20 youth forum on Parliament Hill that Canada's banks didn't have to be bailed out during the global financial crisis and shouldn't be saddled with the proposed levy. "They were not able to exploit some of the opportunities that got so many of these other western banks into trouble. That's why we think it would obviously be unfair," Harper said Monday. More broadly, Harper said the tax is a bad idea because, "you can't tax an economy into prosperity; likewise you can't tax a financial sector into stability." Harper said he will use his position as host to push the G20 to adopt a more sustainable system of financial regulation as a corrective to the economic meltdown. Harper's latest comments mark the start of a renewed push by his government to derail the idea, which is also being opposed by some of the developing economies of the G20.

### **USA and EU set for showdown on banking tax at G20**

On May 26, 2010 the European Commission unveiled a framework for a levy on banks to charge them in advance for future crises, setting the stage for a showdown on the tax at a meeting of G20 world leaders in June. Michel Barnier, the commissioner in charge of an overhaul of financial services in Europe, promised a new European Union-wide framework by 2011 that could impose a levy on a bank's assets, liabilities or profits to pay for crises. Barnier said in a statement. "We need to build a system which ensures that the financial sector will pay the cost of banking crises in the future." In making its announcement, the EU's executive hopes to build momentum for a global levy on banks ahead of a

meeting of leaders of G20 countries in Toronto next month. In the text of its proposal, officials write: "The EU should lead G20 efforts to find a global approach." But there are deep divisions within Europe about the scope of such a tax and what the money collected should be used for.

Last April, finance ministers from the 27-country bloc failed to agree at a meeting on even broad support for a bank levy. While France and Britain would like it to go to the flagging national budget, Germany wants to ring fence the levy. The European Commission wants it set aside to pay for the winding down of struggling banks. The British Bankers' Association attacked what it called an EU-wide tax. "Why should the banks in one country pay for the problems of banks in another?" said its chief executive Angela Knight. As well as divisions within Europe, there is disagreement globally on imposing a special tax on banks. Canada, whose banks suffered less throughout the crisis, is opposed to such a levy.

The bank tax was being pushed by European countries and had the backing of the Obama administration. Washington has also taken a different tack to Europe. The U.S. wants its fee to recover the costs of the government's Troubled Asset Relief Program put in. President Barack Obama may be signing into law in July a bill implementing most of the G20 pledges, three years after the crisis kicked off in a corner of America's housing market. The European Union is set to approve this year reform of supervision, hedge funds and bank capital and implement new rules on credit rating agencies and securitization. But ministers will also remind each other of the need to coordinate their actions after Germany stunned global markets and its EU partners this month with a unilateral ban on naked selling of sovereign credit default swaps and euro zone debt. Fresh clashes over a global bank levy appear inevitable.

### **Countries face more wrangling**

The world's top countries face more wrangling over a global bank tax next week and crunch time over beefing up capital and cutting risks at big banks. The International Monetary Fund proposed two taxes on banks in April to pay for future bailouts but was sent away to refine its ideas after ministers made no headway. No deal on a uniform tax is likely next week or perhaps even in Toronto late June when the group's leaders meet. Canada remains fiercely opposed, with Australia and South Africa lukewarm, and Japan believes its deposit insurance scheme does the trick. A tax is a

Environment Facility which provides grants for climate change projects in developing countries. It includes references to sustainable development (because the United Nations defines climate change as falling within the scope of sustainable development). It excludes general references to energy, energy efficiency, clean energy, nuclear energy or alternative energy, unless the commitment involves climate change mitigation.

Energy: In the context of the G20, the definition of energy is consistent with its treatment by the G8, with four components. The first consists of the supply, price, transportation and consumption of traditional hydrocarbon energy sources such as oil, natural gas and coal. The second, a close companion, consists of alternative and renewable energy sources, as well as demand-side measures such as energy efficiency and conservation. The third is nuclear safety, including the safe operation of civilian nuclear reactors and the transfer and use of nuclear materials. The fourth is energy trade, including Russian gas trade with Europe and Japan, Russia's energy-pricing policies (in pursuit of accession to the World Trade Organization) and the role of markets in global energy trade. In all cases, the G8's strong link from the start between energy and the natural environment is taken fully into account.

Standards and Codes: This issue area includes all conclusions by the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors referring to the proliferation and adherence to standards and codes. It includes best-practice standards of macroeconomic management and legal codes that govern different financial sectors. Transparency, macroeconomic policy, corporate governance data dissemination, financial sector reform - where they promote cohesion across the national financial sectors and laws governing financial markets - are all included. Also included are banking regulations, as governed by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, and the global governance of securities and financial markets, as defined by the International Organization of Securities Organizations (IOSCO). This issue area does not include surveillance by the International Monetary Fund, crisis prevention or exchange rate policies.

Tax Havens and Money Laundering: The G20's approach to tax havens and money laundering has two components. The definition of tax havens and offshore banking follows the approach taken by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It includes transparency and information

exchange among the various countries involved, broadly defined as "a situation where a competent authority of one country asks the competent authority of another country for specific information in connection with a specific tax inquiry, generally under the authority of a bilateral exchange arrangement between the two countries" by OECD. For the purpose of drawing clear boundaries between the former and latter, it is important to include statements and commitments that explicitly mention money laundering.

Terrorist Finance: Brian Jenkins has defined terrorism as "the violence or threat of violence calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm or to terrorize and cause panic, disorder, and terror within an organized society, thereby bringing about some social or political change." The U.S. State Department defines it as "pre-meditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence and audience," according to the Council on Foreign Relations. These broad definitions are applied to terrorist finance, as set out by the criteria identified here.

### **IMF's Proposed Taxes on Banks**

Charges against Goldman Sachs one of the investment banking giants by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission has inflicted huge reputational damage to the banking industry. The International Monetary Fund led by Dominique Strauss-Khan, has proposal for two new taxes affecting the banks. Those are Financial Stability Contribution (FSC) and Financial Activity Tax (FAT). Financial Stability Contribution aims to charge banks for the cost of implicit government guarantees by levying a fee on their liabilities less their equity and insured deposits. The IMF's recommendation is the money raised goes into a fund to cover the cost of future bailouts. Fearing that the fund could encourage banks to run bigger risks, the IMF suggests the governments must also should have powers to seize and restructure failing banks. Financial Activity Tax would tax bank profits and limit excessive bonuses. Stronger financial regulations is an optional tool in the hands of the regulators, not a commitment from the banking institutions in case unexpected events impact the banking sector, thus might leave the depositors in peril. But banks can pass the levy simply onto the customers, in addition to the existing charges. This is a challenge to the regulators.



Having been in operation for just over 30 years, M&M Twins Limited has tirelessly worked towards ensuring that the Sri Lankan community in Canada has access to most of the food products they have grown up with from 'back home'. With the view of providing more to the community in terms of products, M&M Twins has recently expanded their product range under the EDRO Brand. The EDRO brand has been in the Canadian market for well over 20 years and is renowned for high quality Spices and Curry Powders.

Since its launch in March 2010, the new range of EDRO products have been used by the

## M & M Twins expand products under EDRO brand

community. Some of the firm favourites are the Dry Fish varieties (Karawala) which are ready to eat as well as the Sambols. The Seeni Sambol, Katta Sambol and Coconut Sambol are of very good quality and there is a liberal quantity of Maldive Fish flakes (Skip Jack Tuna) which serves to enhance the taste.

M&M Twins has taken into account the changing market trend - the need to be able to cook quickly. Giving due respect that most of us Sri Lankans love Rice and curry but seldom have time to prepare it, the EDRO brand has developed a range of high quality curry mixes. You can now prepare your favourite curry by just using 2-3 table spoons of these mixes. The mixes are available in Chicken, Beef, Mutton, Pork, Crab, Prawn, Fish,



Ambulthiyal and Tandoori flavours. In addition to the curries, they have also introduced 2 easy to use rice flavourings - Yellow Rice Mix and Biriyanis mix which will no doubt help in creating a mouth watering meal!

M&M Twins hopes to expand the depth of the EDRO brand in time to come with the intention of enabling all Canadian Sri Lankans

to create a total Sri Lankan meal. To this end, plans are already underway to bring in some authentic Sri Lankan rice, a highly purified Virgin Coconut oil; which will enhance the flavour of the food, as well as many other firm favourites.

As Mohan Perera, the owner of M&M Twins points out, the key features of these new items in the

range is that these products are 100% compliant with all the food safety and labelling regulations in Canada. As Mohan points out, there are many regulations set by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), especially for fish products. He affirms that all these products have been tested by the CFIA and have been found to be compliant with all regulations such as for chemicals like mercury and histamine which are found in excessive amounts in most fish imports from South Asia. M&M Twins hope to further expand their range of products and would like to get feedback from the community on what they would like to see available. You can email your comments to feedback.mmtwins@gmail.com

## Sri Lanka President approves Tamil Parliamentarians' visit to Menik Farm IDP camp but Defence Secretary disallows It

12 Members of Parliament of the Tamil National Alliance undertook a trip to the Vanni to visit the several camps in which civilians were being kept, to visit the detention camps in which the young Tamil people were detained and also visit the several areas in the Vanni where resettlement and rehabilitation are said to have commenced.

The objective of the visit was to ascertain true factual position. HE the President was kept informed of the visit by letters and he was kindly requested to facilitate the same. Mr. R. Sampanthan, leader of the TNA Parliamentary Group kept in constant touch with the Secretary to the President Mr. Lalith Weeratunga with regard to the visit. The visit accordingly commenced on Friday the 21st May and was to continue on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd May.

Mr Lalith Weeratunga Secretary to the President was kept informed of the dates of the visit and the visit had his total

concurrence, implying that the President himself concurred with the visit.

On Saturday the 22nd May around 9 am the TNA Parliamentary Group arrived at the entrance of Zone 4, one of the camps in which the civilians were being kept. The team was informed by the Brigadier in charge that there was no approval for the Parliamentarians to visit the camps and that the Defence Secretary had informed that the visit should not be allowed. Mr R. Sampanthan contacted Mr Lalith Weeratunga, Secretary to the President and explained the position.

The Secretary to the President stated that he would sort out the issue and requested the Parliamentary Group to remain until the matter was settled. After waiting for about an hour at the entrance, efforts to contact Mr Lalith Weeratunga were not successful.

Accordingly after about one hour the Parliamentary Group left

the entrance of Zone 4, leaving behind with the Presidential Secretariat the phone numbers on which Mr. R. Sampanthan could be contacted. There was no further contact with Mr. R. Sampanthan.

This act of denying entry to the elected representatives of the people, who are being kept in these camps is an affront to the legitimate democratic rights of these people and an insult to the whole democratic process. This despotic act has been committed by persons, who obviously have a great deal to conceal.

We request all the people in Sri Lanka and the world at large including the United Nations and its relevant organs to take cognizance of this act of unbridled authoritarianism.

We condemn this dictatorial act and call upon the Sri Lankan government to take corrective measures.

(Press Release of the Tamil National Alliance)

## Terrorists attack Ahmadiyya Mosques in Lahore, Pakistan

Statement by the Honourable Jim Karygiannis, Member of Parliament, Scarborough-Agincourt

My thoughts and prayers are with members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Canada and throughout the world, and the family and friends of those who lost their lives today, in violent attacks on worshippers attending Friday prayers. I also pray for the speedy recovery of those who were injured.

While it is unclear, at this time, how many Ahmadis were killed or injured during the attacks on the Baitul Nur Mosque in Model Town and the Darul Zikr Mosque in Ghari Shahu - the mosques are covered in blood. An estimated 2,000 worshippers were attending Friday prayers when the attacks occurred.

I mourn, along with the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim community, this tragic loss of life. I know members of the community who



have lost relatives and friends in this unprovoked, barbaric act.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at is a minority sect in Pakistan. In 1974, Pakistan passed legislation that declared Ahmadis to be 'non-Muslim' and, in 1984, further legislation was passed in which the practice of the faith was outlawed.

Canada and the international community must condemn these unprovoked attacks on people, who were assembled in the practice of their faith. The people responsible for these grievous acts must be brought to justice. The extremists who perpetrated these terrible acts must not be allowed to win.

## Independent art film society of Toronto presents 8th International Tamil Film Festival

The 8th Annual International Tamil Film Festival, organized by the Independent Art Film Society of Toronto (IAFS), will be held on June 12, 2010 at the Scarborough Civic Centre. As in the past, the festival will showcase the best of the Tamil short films made in the last year.

IAFS has been instrumental in the growth of the Tamil Film Industry in Toronto and around the world.

Every year the best short films around the world are collected and showcased to encourage and educate Tamil filmmakers in Toronto. This year's

screenings include many local short films as well as critically acclaimed Tamil Diaspora short films such as 'Wanni, Mouse ...'. Many of the movies which will be showcased this year have already been recognized with awards by various international film festivals. The

films screened at this year's festival include movies from Sri Lanka, Singapore, Europe, India, and Canada.

The 12 films to be screened this year were selected from over 70 entries. The films also have English subtitles which enable them to reach a wider audience.

As a special feature at this year's festival, one minute films made by children under the age of 10 years will also be screened. Since this is an introductory category for this year, IAFS will screen all the entries received in this category.

IAFS considers this an important category as it motivates and encourages young artistic talents within our community.

# TARANG 2010 - A Fund Raising event



Sharika Foundation and Kashmiri Overseas Association of Canada (KOAC) organised a culturally enriching variety entertainment show - TARANG 2010 which included performances from the cultural ambassadors like Shiamak Davar and Lata Pada's dance group. In addition, the program showcased the local Kashmiri talent Ms Jaya Kitchloo, a renowned singer from Toronto and her group enthralled the audience with their vocal skills. The evening also had live dance performances from Ms Akshina Taploo, Ms Ritu Bhan while Mr. Shruvan Bhat and his group gave a powerful Bhangra performance which got the crowd tapping their feet. The show stoppers for the

event was the sumptuous and authentic Kashmiri cuisine, which left the taste buds inundated with the exotic flavours. The ingredients used to prepare the recipes were specially procured from India gave authenticity to the Kashmiri recipe. Paintings donated by Kashmiri painting artist Ms Manisha Madan for a silent auction attracted special attention.

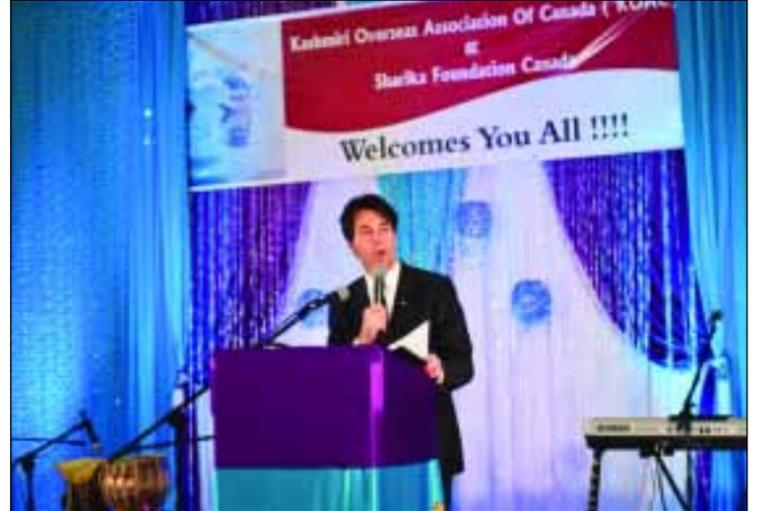
The chief guest for the evening Liberal MPP, Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins praised the foundation for the charity projects they are committed to. President of Sharika Foundation Mr Ashok Bhatt has urged the community to come forward and support the cause. Mr. Bhushan Bhat, President, Kashmiri

Overseas Association of Canada highlighted the contributions and achievements of the Kashmiri Community in the GTA area. Mr. Vinod Munshi, Team Leader for the Tarang 2010 team sincerely thanked every one who have supported the cause and found time to come and grace the event.

Sharika Foundation is a registered charity formed to assist immigrants settle in Canada, providing programs for the welfare of seniors and youth and relieve the suffering of persons displaced from their homes due to natural disasters.

Kashmiri Overseas Association of Canada is a non-profit organization that serves the social and cultural aspects of the Kashmiri com-

munity in Canada. KOAC seeks to acquire and disseminate information to preserve the rich Kashmiri Heritage, Culture and Language.



## CWVHR organizes conference in Toronto

Some of the pictures taken at the Conference on "War Crimes, Genocide and Crime against Humanity" organized by Centre for War Victims and Human Rights (CWVHR.org) at Sheraton Parkway Hotel on May 15th.



Speakers Discussing



Organizers at Registration



Lawyer Luxmi Vasan and Juanita Nathan, candidate for Markham School Board Trustee

## Students' artistic exploration of storms to adorn West Wing Gallery at The Scarborough Hospital

Young artists attending Mary Ward Catholic Secondary School in Scarborough have created a body of work, entitled 'After the Storm,' that explores the literal and metaphorical concept of the storms that can sweep through our environment and our lives.

This ambitious multimedia exhibition will be unveiled at The Scarborough Hospital's West Wing Gallery to be enjoyed by hospital staff, patients and visitors.

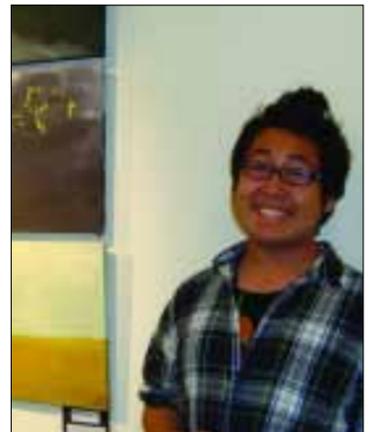
Students participating in Mary Ward CCS's Self Directed Learning art program are allowed the freedom to fully explore a wide range of materials and techniques unhindered by the usual restrictions and roadblocks. Starting with a simple word - tempest - the

artists' works grasp that while weather often has a dramatic impact on our lives, the storms of emotion and personal challenge can often have more turbulent and lasting effects.

Some of the student artists were present on Wednesday, May 19th, along with John Notten, Mary Ward CCSS, Visual Arts Instructor and Henry Borkowski, Director, Facility Development, The Scarborough Hospital.

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH), Canada's largest urban community hospital, delivers innovative, high quality patient care, advocates for our community's health and wellness issues, and is a leader in research, teaching and learning. TSH is a regional treat-

ment centre for dialysis and is renowned for its sexual assault care centre and mental health programs. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, TSH is also a referral centre for vascular surgery, pacemakers and corneal implants.





**MONSOON  
FEATURE**

For the newcomers in Canada and others who want to switch their professions or businesses, in this series of articles last month I introduced you to Mr. Rajan Kaushal, who is an expert in the Auto Body Repairs Business. I am sure interested people must have used the given information.

In this article I am going to introduce Mr. Sandeep Tyagi, an expert in the Yoga and Yoga Teaching Business. Mr. Sandeep Tyagi is in the Yoga Teachers Training Business for more than 12 years in his full zeal and enthusiasm. He is a well recognized name in the field of Yoga Teaching and Hindi/Sanskrit teaching among South Asians and Canadians.

I met Mr. Tyagi in Freedom Yoga Teachers Training Centre located in Brampton, ON. I saw a number of people learning Yoga, Sanskrit and Hindi in groups at the centre. I asked Mr. Sandeep Tyagi a few questions regarding his profession and services being rendered to his disciples. I am sure the information acquired from Mr. Tyagi would be useful for the readers of 'Monsoon Journal'.

Saran: What brought you in Yoga Teaching and for you is Yoga Teaching mere a profession or worship?

Sandeep: I believe in - 'Work is worship' and for that reason Yoga Teaching is a profession as well as worship for me. Being a religious minded person, for me practically Yoga is worship but looking at the prevalent trend there is no harm in giving it the shape of a business. I am a scholar of gurukul thus Yoga lives in my blood. Other reason for me joining Yoga teaching as a profession is protecting people from fraud yoga gurus.

Saran: How would you explain Yoga Teaching - Is it a real business or an effort to enhance a tradition?

Sandeep: In the current era no

# Yoga Teachers Training

## - A Thankful Profession

**BUSINESS - 4**

tradition can survive unless is professionally and practically potent. For example, may it be Ayurveda or Sanskrit language or Astrology or Yoga, I mean anything. I am of the opinion that 'Survival of the fittest' phrase needs an addition now. It has to be 'survival of the fittest upon practicality'. If you see Yoga Tradition prospering in the western countries like America, Canada, Germany, France and England it is because Yoga has been adopted as an industry.

Saran: How would you differentiate between Yoga Training and Yoga Teachers Training and how would you explain the terms duo in the language of masses?

Sandeep: Either individually or in groups, performing Yoga asanas without the guidance of a trained teacher is like inviting dangers. Performing yoga asanas by watching TV or Videos although has become a fashion but is not advisable. Yoga asanas must be practiced under the guidance of a trained teacher. Freedom Yoga Teachers Training Centre provides proper training of Yoga asanas under the guidance of trained teachers.

On the other hand if someone wants to learn this profession to propagate it further needs proper Yoga Education. Freedom Yoga Teachers Training Centre is a registered yoga institute and welcomes all who believe in the strength of Yoga.

Saran: Masses have an opinion about Yoga that it is a daily routine of Sages which some professional minds have made a tool to earn money?

Sandeep: Lord Krishna, King Janak and many others who were well recognized as Yoga Propagators were family persons. They had their families and lived in the society, not in the forests. In the modern and medieval world, Shri Ayyangar, Pattabhijoyas, Shri Krishnamacharya, Vikram Chaudhary, Swami Ram Krishna

Paramhans, all of them had families. In fact they are the people who kept the torch of Yoga tradition and handed over to the new generation.

The word Yog was converted to Yoga for an ease to pronounce and now has been accepted in this form globally. Be it a fashion or a tradition, Yoga Teachers are doing a great job in order to propagate a culture.

Saran: What are the basic requirements to start a Yoga Teachers Training School? How much investment, what sort of inventory, education, experience and items are required in order to establish it?

Sandeep: To start a Yoga Teachers Training Centre first of all one needs a certificate of a registered yoga teacher from a Yoga Academic Institute. Experience is the first requirement. Investment and belongings like mats etc. are essentially needed to start such institute. Location, Advertisement and website play a vital role in fast establishment of the training centre. An individual or an organization interested to establish their own Yoga Teachers Training Centre can contact Freedom Yoga Teachers Training Centre or Universal Business Chambers for any further information.

Saran: What would you advice to the new comers in Canada and others who want to switch their profession as to how they can enter into Yoga

Teaching?

Sandeep: I would invite more and more people to join this profession in order to improve their health as well as others who would be benefited because of them.

Saran: What different services you provide in Freedom Yoga Teachers Training Centre?

Sandeep: Keeping into consideration requirements of yoga loving individuals and groups we have fabricated classes and sessions as per the facility and time available with them. Morning, Afternoon, Evening, Week days and Week end Yoga Classes are available with us. We complete 200 hours plus Yoga Course designed by Yoga Alliance for Teachers Training. Classes are also available for those who want to upgrade their current level. As I told before Freedom Yoga Gurukul is a registered institution. Students can learn Sanskrit and Hindi from the centre.

Saran: What message do you have for the readers of 'Monsoon Journal'?

Sandeep: Yoga is not just a physical exercise but is a strong tool for spiritual uplift. No one should make it a tool of jugglery for money minting.

Saran: How can readers of 'Monsoon Journal' contact you. Are they eligible for any discounts?

Sandeep: Readers of 'Monsoon Journal' can contact us for learning



**By Prof. Saran Ghai**

Yoga/Hindi/Sanskrit or register for Yoga Teachers Training Course. They can contact us at (647) 282-2529, E-mail: omfreedomyoga@yahoo.ca, visit our website: www.freedomyoga.ca or through Universal Business Chambers. If someone brings a cutting of this article will get a straight 20% discount on all our services.

**-Prof. Saran Ghai, President - Universal Business Chambers**

Dear Readers, Next month we will give you some information about some other Business. If you are interested to know about the details of any business, please call (905) 794-4488 or e-mail us: universal@universal-businesschambers.com. If you are an Insurance/Real Estate/Mortgage Agent or a Financial Adviser, contact us. We would like to share your experience with the newcomers to Canada and to those who want to switch their profession. For any further information or membership enquiries of UBC, please e-mail or call at (416) 816-5559.

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## Matrimonial

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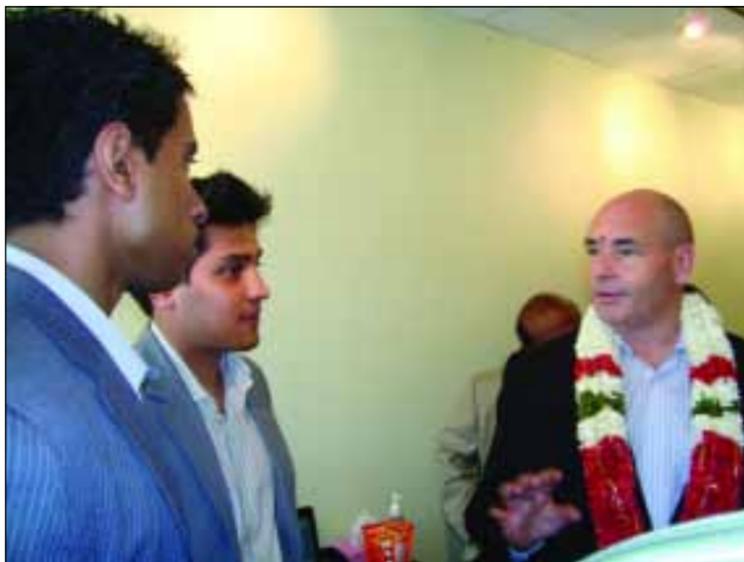
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# Opening of Polairus Technologies Inc. in Scarborough

Ara Ehamparam and Amit Shah are the proud young co-founders of Polairus Technologies Inc., a new information technology based firm, opened in Scarborough recently.

The idea of opening such a firm arose from the growing need for asset tracking software solutions for enterprise-sized firms. The company also hopes to drive a trend towards reverse outsourcing within Canadian circles-particularly with smaller companies. The ability to better manage their assets will also eventually lead to substantial cost saving for these businesses. At present, many Canadian soft-ware companies outsource work to countries outside of Canada. Polairus Technologies want to reverse this trend by employing heavily within Canada's overlooked pool of engineering talent. A cycle of wealth creation occurs when Canadian talent is employed-these employees pay taxes which are then in turn used by the Government to fund infrastructure improvements in areas like healthcare and education or put into funds which provide grants to other aspiring entrepreneurs. This in turn creates new jobs which result in a larger tax base and the cycle repeats. The company also has future plans to modify the software solution to meet the needs of organizations within the health-



care sector. Aravinthan (Ara) will function as the CEO of Polairus Technologies Inc. and will be responsible for overseeing the day to day operations including marketing, strategy, financing, human resources and formulating the company's culture. Amit Shah(CTO) will be responsible for creating the blue-print for the Company's approach to technological research and development and managing the efforts of

Polairus' technological talent. His primary role will be to create the most innovative technological solutions possible in the areas Polairus' product line touches. Amit and Ara are also strong believers that entrepreneurs, particularly in the area of technology, are the biggest creators of new value in an economy. They hope that more Canadians join them in the world of entrepreneurship in order that Canada can reduce it's reliance on natural resources to drive it's engine of growth forward.

Among those present at the



opening event were Mr.George Smitherman, former Ontario Deputy Premier and a candidate for the forthcoming Toronto Mayoral elections, Bas Balkissoon, MPP and Amrit Mangat, MPP.

Polairus Technologies Inc. is situated at 80, Corporate Drive, Suite 206, in Scarborough.

Seen here are some pictures taken on the official opening day...



# Town of Richmond Hill Fire Training Centre Grand Opening

The Richmond Hill Fire Training Centre was officially opened this past Saturday, May 15. Mayor David Barrow, Fire Chief Steve Kraft, Chief Administrative Officer Joan Anderton, Commissioner, Community Services Shane Baker, Town Council and approximately 100 onlookers were on hand to mark the occasion that also featured a high-angle training demonstration and auto-extraction exercise in addition to the ribbon-cutting.

See some photos from the opening ceremony.



High-Angle Training Demonstration



**Ribbon Cutting (from L to R) Deputy Phil Chief Phil Dawson, Councillor Godwin Chen, Councillor Arnie Warner, Commissioner, Community Services Shane Baker, Councillor Lynn Foster, Deputy Mayor Brenda Hogg, Mayor David Barrow, Councillor David Cohen, Councillor Vito Spatafora, Chief Administrative Officer Joan Anderton, Councillor Nick Papa, Councillor Greg Beros, and Fire Chief Steve Kraft.**



Mayor David Barrow speaks at the ribbon-cutting ceremony

## Kauvsegan Legal Associates Professional Corporation new office Opened

A new company named Kauvsegan Legal Associates Professional Corporation to deal with tort claims was opened recently at Suite 205, 80 - Corporate Drive, Scarborough.

The above company will specialize in dealing with tort claims where a wrongful act that injures another and for which the law permits civil actions. Relief maybe obtained for such claims in the form of damages or injunction. Torts

include injuries to persons such as injuries caused by negligent automobile accidents.

Among those present at the opening event were Mr.George Smitherman, former Ontario Deputy Premier and a candidate for the forthcoming Toronto Mayoral elections, Bas Balkissoon, MPP and Amrit Mangat, MPP. Other guests at the function were dignitaries and leading members of the Tamil community.

## Harmony 2010 Charity Event by Durham Tamil Association

Celebrating its 10th Anniversary, Durham Tamil Association is organising a fund raising event on June 12th Saturday evening at Toronto Don Valley Hotel (formerly Crown Plaza),"Harmony 2010" is an event with entertainment by Durham Tamil youth and a full course dinner. All proceeds raised from the event will go towards funding the growing number of Free Tamil Classes in Durham run by DTA and several Youth and Seniors activities and local charities. For tickets (\$50 per person) and information please contact

**Kanga 416.984.4937, info@durhamtamils.com, www.durhamtamils.com**

**Location & Directions:**

Toronto Don Valley Hotel & Suites, 1250 Eglinton Avenue East  
Toronto, Ontario. M3C 1J3

(Entrance to hotel off of Wynford Drive)

From QEW/Gardiner (Downtown):

Take Don Valley Parkway North, Exit at Eglinton Avenue East, stay in the right hand lane, exits at Wynford Drive, turn right at the lights, and pass underneath the bridge, through the next set of lights, the Hotel's entrance is on the left.

From HWY 401:

Take Don Valley Parkway South to Wynford Drive exit, turn left (East) onto Wynford Drive, turn right at the next set of lights, the Hotel's entrance is on the right.

From Airport:

Follow 401 East to Don Valley Parkway. Travel south on Don Valley Parkway to Wynford Drive exit, turn left (East) onto Wynford Drive, turn right at the next set of lights, the Hotel's entrance is on the right.



As Torontonians started to celebrate the beautiful sunny weather, Nuwan Fonseka also unleashed the freedom of his art show. "Let's Celebrate the Freedom" was the theme of the recent Sri Lankan cultural event last May 23, 2010 at Derry Rd. West, Mississauga from 11 am to 6pm. The picnic area of Meadowvale Conservation Area was the perfect spot where family and friends gathered for the show. A taste of Sri Lankan foods, music and games for children were all freely facilitated.

The art show entitled "Arts from Freedom" presented by Sri Lankan mixed media painter, Fonseka highlighted the event. His inviting art works captured the visitors' interest. Given his extensive background in mental health field having obtained his doctoral education in the United Kingdom, Nuwan is a mental health clinician by profession. His involvement in clinical mental health works intensified his passion for arts. During the event, pieces of beautiful arts painted in oil, acrylic and pastels caught the attention of the participants. Canadian Sri Lankan's, some politicians, organizers, guests and

## Celebrating the Freedom of Fonseka's Art Show

people in the community were entertained of the impressive arts display.

The figure-based paintings in rich colorful presentations had drawn a lot of attention. Interested participants freely expressed their admiration and opinions on the various subject matters of the paintings. Nuwan's creative mind expressed on his paintings showed the in-depth topics on religion, philosophy and spirituality. Being a classically trained mixed media artist, subtle themes were sensibly and creatively painted in distinctive forms, lines, shapes and colours. His paintings finely defined the freedom of expression of the mind and emotions.

Nuwan is planning to hold a solo art show sometime in September or October of this year. Arrangements are still to be finalized. Further details will be announced soon. Everyone is invited for the show. "The artist is the only lover; he alone has the pure vision of beauty, and love is the vision of the soul when it is permitted to gaze upon immortal beauty"

- Isadora Duncan

For more information, or to purchase Nuwan's art works, visit nuwan's website at <http://art-snuwan.weebly.com>

**Cristina Edulan**



## Child labour in developing countries

The future of a country is in the well-being of its children. William Wordsworth beautifully expresses this in his famous lines, "Child is father of the man." So it becomes imperative for the health of a nation to protect its children from premature labour, which is hazardous to their mental, physical, educational and spiritual development needs. Children must be saved from the clutches of social injustice and educational deprivation. They must be given opportunities for healthy, normal and happy growth.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), 120 million children in the 5-14 age group work fulltime or more; of these, India and China is responsible for about 80 million. Child labour is a complicated matter, but enough has been discovered over the years to conclude that children are often placed in extremely hazardous areas such as mines and factories with exposure to toxic chemicals and poor ventilation systems.

What brand of clothing are you wearing right now? Where your shirt was made (China or India)? Do you know what went into the making of your clothes? It could be the sweat, tears or

blood of a child. Child labour in India, China and other developing nations is a human rights issue for the whole world. It is a serious and extensive problem, with many under the age of 14 working in carpet making factories, glass blowing units and making fireworks with bare little hands.

According to Government of India figures, there are 20 million child labourers in the country. Children work for eight hours at a stretch with only a small break for frugal meals; they are ill-nourished. Most migrant children, who cannot go home, sleep at work places, which is very bad for their health and development.

Over 75 per cent of the Indian population still resides in rural areas and are very poor. Poor rural families perceive their children as an income-generating resource to supplement the family income. Parents sacrifice their children's education to the growing needs of their younger siblings and view them as wage earners for the entire clan.

Children are often assigned such positions like operating heavy machinery designed for adults. Often they work 12-hour shifts or longer. All of this takes its toll on bodies not yet fully devel-

oped. Children who work under adverse conditions often end up stunted in growth, knock-kneed, deformed, or otherwise damaged for life. In girls, the pelvic area may not develop properly which can lead to the eventual death of a baby the grown woman bears.

Some common causes of child labour are poverty, parental illiteracy, social apathy, ignorance, lack of education and exposure, exploitation of cheap and unorganised labour. The family practice to inculcate traditional skills in children also pulls little ones inexorably in the trap of child labour as they never get the opportunity to learn anything else.

Poverty and overpopulation have been identified as the two main causes of child labour. Parents are forced to send little children into hazardous jobs for reason of survival, even when they know it is wrong. Monetary constraints and the need for food, shelter and clothing drive their children in the trap of premature labour. Illiterate and ignorant parents do not understand the need for wholesome physical, cognitive and emotional development of their child. They are themselves uneducated and unexposed, so they don't realise the importance

of education for their children.

Adult unemployment and urbanisation are also causes of child labour. Adults often find it difficult to find jobs because factory owners find it more beneficial to employ children at cheap rates. This exploitation is particularly visible in garment factories of urban areas. Adult exploitation of children is also seen in many places. The industrial revolution has had a negative effect by giving rise to circumstances which encourage child labour.

Sometimes multinationals prefer to employ child workers in developing countries. For, they can be recruited for less pay, more work can be extracted from them and there is no union problem with them. This attitude also makes it difficult for adults to find jobs in factories, forcing them to drive their little ones to work to keep the home fire burning.

The Govt of India at the centre has tried to take some steps to alleviate the problem of child labour in recent years by invoking a law that makes the employment of children below 14 years illegal, except in family-owned enterprises. However, this law is rarely adhered to due to practical difficulties.

Factories usually find loopholes and circumvent the law by

declaring that the child labourer is a distant family member. Also in villages there is no law enforcing or regulatory mechanism. And punitive action for commercial enterprises violating these laws is almost non-existent.

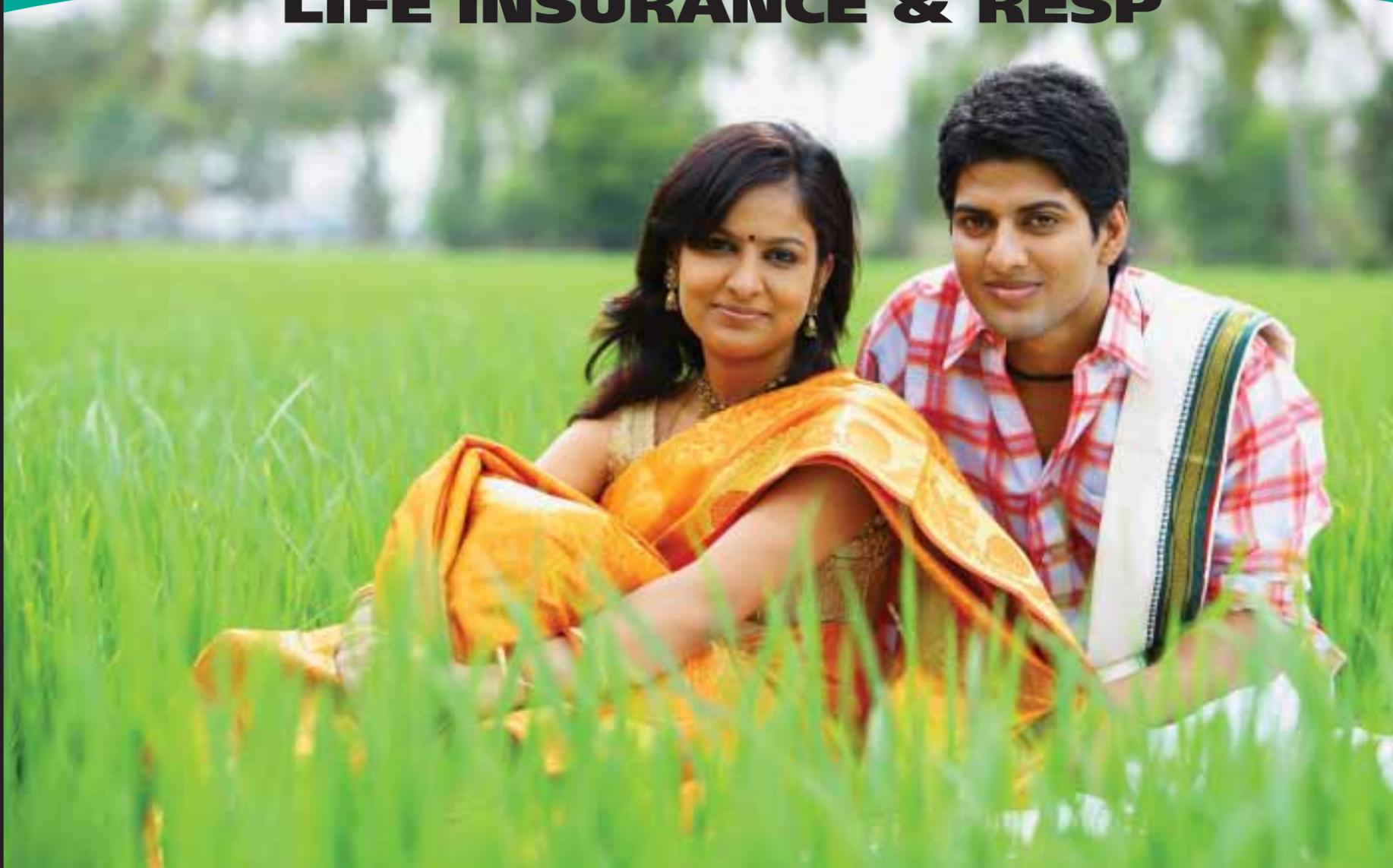
In India, important legislation on child labour includes the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986 prohibiting the employment of children below 14 years of age in specified hazardous occupations and processes. Along with this, the December 1996 Supreme Court of India judgement directs the withdrawal of children from hazardous occupation and the creation of a welfare fund for them, besides regulating working conditions in non hazardous occupations.



**Kanayalal Raina**

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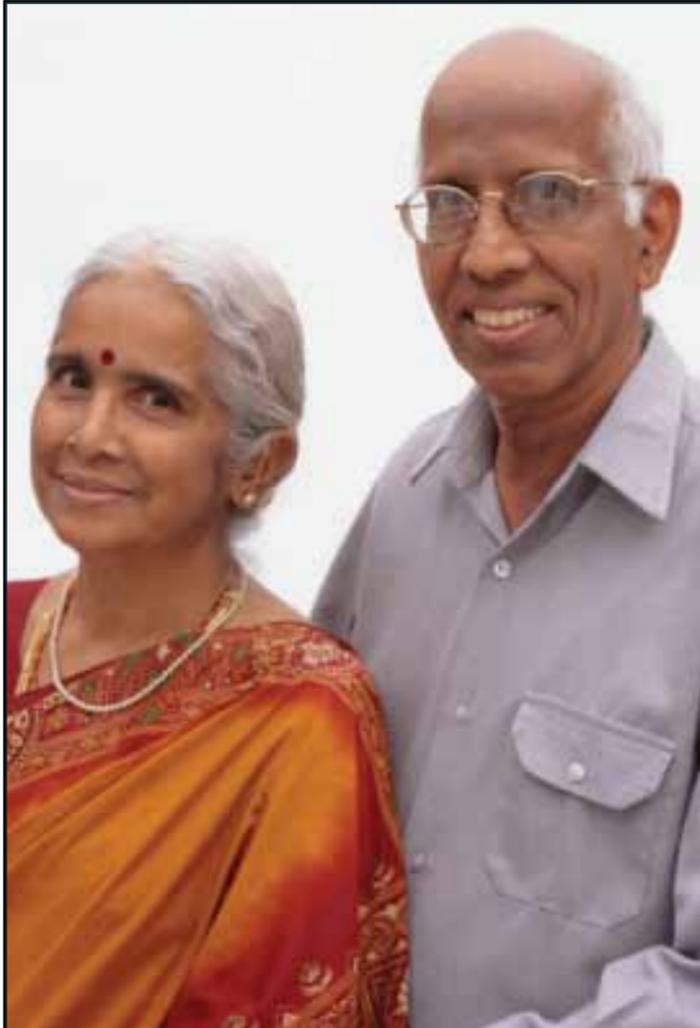
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