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# Monsoon Journal

A parfait media publication

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## New \$72-million West Wing formally opens at The Scarborough Hospital General Campus

by Krishni Loganathan, BA (Hons) Political Science

On September 9, 2009 hundreds gathered to bring in the long anticipated West Wing at The Scarborough Hospital General Campus.

After many years of careful planning and preparation and three years of construction The Scarborough Hospital could formally open their doors of the West Wing to the community.

The celebrations of the West

Wing brought in many notable figures including Hon. David Caplan, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and MPP for Scarborough Centre, Brad Duguid who both spoke on the successful completion of the new West Wing.

The West Wing houses the new Emergency Department, Critical Care Centre, Diagnostic Imaging, and many other hospital services.

"We now have a larger, mod-

ern, state-of-the-art Emergency facility that is better equipped to handle the 55,000-plus visits we see at this campus every year." Stephen Smith, Board of Directors of The Scarborough Hospital.

Dr. Tom Chan, Medical Director and Chief Emergency and Urgent Care of The Scarborough Hospital spoke on the numerous benefits that the West Wing has brought to the hospital including new state-of-

the-art equipment, and private and spacious rooms for patients.

The Scarborough Hospital's CEO and President, Dr. John Wright highlighted the growing healthcare need that the community faces and the hospital's commitment to fulfill these needs.

A new West Wing brings in additional and essential services and equipment that can serve the needs of the community of not only Scarborough but the Greater Toronto Area.



(L-R) Hon. David Caplan, Minister of Health & Long Term Care, Brad Duguid, MPP, Scarborough Centre and Dr John Wright, CEO & President, The Scarborough Hospital at far right



Minister Hon. David Caplan being interviewed by ATN

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# Parliamentary Secretary Keddy Opens New Trade Office in India and Attends WTO Meeting

Gerald Keddy, Parliamentary Secretary to the Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, today concluded a successful visit to India, where he opened a new Canadian trade office in Kolkata, a dynamic business, transportation and financial hub and the country's fourth-largest city.

"Our new office in Kolkata will give Canadian companies another competitive edge in one of our priority markets and further strengthen our commercial relationship with India," said Mr. Keddy. "I am proud to say that the addition of this new office in

India will create one of Canada's most extensive trade networks anywhere in the world."

With existing trade offices in Hyderabad, New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Ahmedabad and Chandigarh, this enlarged network will provide market intelligence and expert advice to help Canadian companies take advantage of trade and investment opportunities.

Mr. Keddy visited Kolkata before attending a ministerial-level meeting on the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Development Round, held September 3 and 4 in New Delhi.

"Canada continues to support

an ambitious and balanced outcome to the Doha negotiations. Canadian agricultural producers, manufacturers and service providers stand to benefit from the expanded access to global markets and strengthened trade rules arising from successful negotiations," said Mr. Keddy. "Our government will also continue to defend supply-managed industries in the WTO negotiations."

Mr. Keddy's visit builds upon a trade mission led by Minister Day in January, during which the Minister announced an agreement to initiate exploratory discussions

toward a comprehensive economic partnership agreement between Canada and India.

Mr. Keddy also reinforced Minister Day's commitment to sign a Canada-India Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA) as soon as possible.

India is a dynamic, rapidly growing market that represents a huge opportunity for Canadian goods, services and technology. In 2008, Canadian merchandise exports to India totalled \$2.4 billion, a 35-percent increase over the year before. Two-way direct investment reached \$1.8 billion in 2008.



# Canadian Tamils demonstrate against China's support to Sri Lanka

Several hundred Canadian Tamils gathered outside the Chinese Consulate in Toronto, Wednesday, August 26, 2009 to protest against China's financial, economic, and diplomatic support of the Sri Lankan government. Many Tamils attending the protest have their relatives or friends in the Sri Lanka military supervised internment camps in Vavuniya where more than 300,000 Tamil civilians.

The protest, organized by the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) started at 3 p.m. and lasted until 8 p.m.

Protesters chanted and waved placards, calling for China to stop its aid to Sri Lanka.

Demonstrators also passed out pamphlets to inform the public about the humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka.



China is the largest supplier of arms to the Sri Lankan military and increased its help when other countries refused to sell military supplies for use in the civil war.

"Last year, China was also Sri Lanka's largest foreign donor, providing more than \$1-billion into

the country's treasury.

Due to China's diplomatic support in the international arena, Sri Lanka was also able to disregard western nations' calls to adhere to human rights norms," said the spokesperson for the protest organizers.

# Tamil Canadians Condemn 20-Year Sentence for Journalist

Tamil Canadians denounce the 20-year prison sentence given to a Tamil journalist, who was named a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International.

A Sri Lankan high court sentenced Jayaprakash Sittampalam (J.S.) Tissainayagam today under Sri Lanka's anti-terrorism law for writing critical articles about the government's war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

"As a pillar of democracy, press freedom should be respected and encouraged not brutally shut down," said Harini Sivalingam, policy director for the Canadian Tamil Congress. "Misusing the legal system to punish a reporter who was simply doing his job puts the entire justice system into disrepute."

This past World Press Freedom Day, President Barack Obama singled out Mr.

Tissainayagam and two other Chinese journalists as examples of journalists jailed or harassed



for doing their jobs. Mr. Obama said:

"In every corner of the globe, there are journalists in jail or being actively harassed ... Emblematic examples of this distressing reality are figures like J.S. Tissainayagam in Sri Lanka, or Shi Tao and Hu Jia in China."

Mr. Tissainayagam, who was

arrested in March 2008, wrote for the Sunday Times, North Eastern Monthly, and the website, www.outreachsl.com. On the day of his sentencing, Mr. Tissainayagam was named the first winner of the Peter Mackler Award for Courageous and Ethical Journalism by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the Global

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Media Forum.

As RSF secretary-general Jean-Francois Julliard said, Mr. Tissainayagam is a journalist concerned with finding the truth and should never have been imprisoned.

Mr. Tissainayagam's case is part of a wider crackdown on free media and dissent in Sri Lanka. RSF ranked Sri Lanka 165 out of 173 countries in the world for press freedom in 2008. Reporters were barred from the affected zones during the latter stages of the conflict. Amnesty International has said attacks on journalists, relentless intimidation, and government-imposed restrictions on reporting are threatening freedom of expression in Sri Lanka. At least 14 media workers have been killed over the past three years, including Lasantha Wickrematunga. He posthumously won the 2009

UNESCO World Press Freedom Prize.

"Sri Lanka is going to incredible lengths to ensure that only the state-approved version of the truth comes out," said Ms. Sivalingam.

Currently, media and human rights organizations do not have free and independent access to the camps. Human Rights Watch (HRW) has further reported that humanitarian organizations with access have been forced to sign a statement that they will not disclose information about the conditions in the camps without government permission. On several occasions, HRW said the government expelled foreign journalists and aid workers who had collected and publicized information about camp conditions, or did not renew their visas.

For more information, contact 416.240.0078.

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From the Publisher's Desk ...

## Peace is recognized on September 21 as International Peace Day

by Krishni Loganathan,  
BA (Hons) Political Science

One day a year weapons are laid down and peace is embraced worldwide. One day a year military organizations respect the cease-fire agreements adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. One day a year all arrays of humanity observe and practice non-violence in their communities and homes. One day a year peace is brought to the global level and mutually respected.

September 21 is identified as the International Day of Peace as it was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in a resolution that was sponsored by Costa Rica. This day was devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace. Later in 2001 a new resolution was passed by the United Nations General Assembly this time sponsored by United Kingdom and Costa Rica to

give the Day of Peace a fixed day instead of the third Tuesday of September and also declare it as a global ceasefire day. In 2005 a 24-hour cease-fire and day of non-violence was called for by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The one day of peace is recognized around the world and arms are put down in solidarity.

Jeremy Gilley is the founder and chairman of Peace One Day which aims to achieve a day that all people around the globe are aware of keeping peace on September 21. Peace One Day is a vision that began with the English filmmaker Jeremy Gilley. Jeremy began in 1999 set out to find a starting point for peace. He had a mission which was to document his efforts to establish the first ever annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence with a fixed calendar date. As he spoke with political figures and people at

the grassroots level he managed to capture all elements of peace. Two years later he achieved his main purpose as the 192 member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted 21 September as an annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence on the UN International Day of Peace. With the day in place, Peace One Day's aim now is to institutionalise Peace Day across the world so it becomes self-sustaining; a day of global unity, and inter-cultural cooperation.

Small steps make large impacts and by creating a day that is recognized worldwide as Peace Day is a step in the right direction to supporting peace across the globe. Although it is only one day of peace it is what this day represents which matters the most. One day where even the military recognizes that they should put down their arms and support the message that is being

spread across the world. One day out of the year that symbolizes humanity at its finest point as this movement is extended from nation to nation.

The International Day of Peace "is meant to be a day of global cease-fire, when all countries and all people stop all hostilities for the entire day. And it is a day on which people around the world observe a minute of silence at 12 noon local time. [...] And let us pledge to do our utmost to carry out the important decisions on peace taken by last week's 2005 World Summit." Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General-21 September 2005

Monsoon Journal joins together in bringing in this year's International Peace Day and hopes you all participate and encourage your friends, family members and co-workers to join in the promotion of peace across the globe.

## 'Sri Lanka IDPs Are Waiting'



VOA Editorial, reflecting views of the US Government:

Nearly 3 months have passed since fighting ended in Sri Lanka between government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam insurgents. After 26 years of conflict, hopes were high that violence and hatred would at last give way to reconciliation, justice, and economic development for all to share. But for some 300,000 ethnic Tamils displaced by the fighting, hope is giving way to frustration.

Many internally displaced persons, or IDPs, continue to be held in government-run camps in northern Sri Lanka. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake says that some progress has been made. About 10,000 have been allowed to leave the camps and approximately 75,000 others are to be released this month. "But most are not allowed to leave," he said, "and it's important for them to have this freedom of movement."

Assistant Secretary Blake and U.S. Chargé d'Affaires in Sri Lanka James Moore recently met with 16 representatives of U.S.-based organizations representing members of the Tamil diaspora to discuss the humanitarian crisis in Sri

Lanka and prospects for political reconciliation.

Assistant Secretary Blake and Chargé Moore said more needs to be done to ease camp congestion, register IDPs and expand the access of humanitarian organizations. To help Sri Lanka recover following the crisis, the United States has provided approximately \$56 million in humanitarian assistance in 2009.

Assistant Secretary Blake and Chargé Moore underscored the importance of political reconciliation. The United States has stressed to the government of Sri Lanka that to achieve a lasting peace, it must promote justice and political reconciliation for all parties, dialogue with all parties - including Tamils inside and outside the country -- on sharing power, and improving protection of human rights.

Assistant Secretary Blake and Chargé Moore recommended that the government of Sri Lanka and the American Tamil diaspora community seek opportunities to engage one another on political reconciliation and the reconstruction of Sri Lanka. The United States will do its part to support that engagement.

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# Ethnic Media partners with Seneca for First Certificate Program

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The National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada in cooperation with the Seneca College in Toronto develop a Canadian Ethnic Media Educational Project from 13 to 15 of November 2009.

The National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada has partnered with the School of Journalism, Seneca College, Finch Campus, in order to create Canada's first program for the introduction of Canadian Journalism to publishers and Editors of Ethnic publications and also Radio and Television program administrators and producers. The three day seminar is scheduled for Friday November 13, Saturday November 14th and Sunday November 15th. A special gala presentation is planned for Saturday night with the R. Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada attending and handling out the certificates to attendees.

All costs occurred for this

event is covered by the organization with the financial support of Heritage Canada and the Canadian Magazine Fund.

A press release was sent on September 2nd from the Office of the President.

Today I am extending a special invitation to Mr. Marc Saint-Pierre, Director General of Government Information Services, to be with us in order to explain to our member the way his department makes the selection of publications. An invitation, also, I am extending to Cossette Canada for the same reason. On Sunday morning members of the Canadian Magazine Fund will explain to the attendees the new rules of the department for financial assistance to member publications.

For those of you traveling outside Toronto, the organization will provide return tickets from the place of origin to Toronto and Back, room for their staying during the seminar in Toronto and three meals for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. There would be a registration fee of \$ 50.00 dollars for each attending member. With



this amount we would cover the amounts for the meals and coffee as the new rules of "Heritage Canada" are not allowing any public expense for meals, and also the issue of the certificates of attendance.

During the weekend I am preparing to send out more information about the program and our activities. Due to the fact that only 150 (hundred and fifty) members, maximum are going to be accepted to attend this education program for professional development I am asking you all intended to attend to confirm

immediately by return email you intention.

As soon this number of 150 candidates completed, in an order of first come first served, no more candidates will be permitted to attend.

Also this is a national program and to this extend we will accept members from all over Canada. From Montreal and Quebec we will accept maximum 20 members, from western Canada 30. We would split this number in 5 from Alberta, 5 from Manitoba and 20 from BC. If there would be any specific reason we can change these numbers accordingly.

For more information please call 416- 921 8926 or 416- 921 4229 or email saras@nepmcc.ca or saras@patrides.com fax :416-921 0723

This project made possible through the financial assistance of "Heritage Canada" Canadian Magazine Fund and the financial support of "CHIN Radio, Lenny Lombardi", "Share" newspaper and publisher Arnold Auguste, Web Printing Inc, Brazilian Canadian Coffee, "Jack Kyriazakos



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The board of directors of the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada wish to express their thanks to "Heritage Canada" and the Canadian Magazine Fund for their financial assistance for the professional development of the members of the Canadian Ethnic Press and Media.

The national Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada is a not-for profit, NGO that promotes excellence, understanding and cooperation among the member publishers and editors of the ethnic press of Canada, by organizing events that facilitate dialogue among its members, the communities, politicians, government officials and academics, promoting the role of the ethnic media in the Canadian society.

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# Ban says his "Asian diplomatic approach" is misunderstood in the West

"We need to be able to respect the culture, tradition and leadership style of each and every leader," UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-moon, a former South Korean foreign minister, told reporters in a visit to Oslo on Monday, Aug 31st. "I have my own charisma, I have my own leadership style," he is quoted as saying in an article published in The Washington Post of Sep 1st, 2009.

Excerpts from the article on Sri Lanka as follows:

## U.N. Chief's 'Quiet' Outreach To Autocrats Causing Discord

For Ban, perhaps the greatest test of engagement as a policy came earlier this year.

In Sri Lanka, where the government was pushing to crush the ruthless Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the secretary general reached out to President Mahinda Rajapaksa to persuade him to show restraint to protect the lives of hundreds of thousands of civilians forced to serve as the Tigers' human shields.

In an effort to maintain a cordial working relationship with

Rajapaksa, Ban and his top advisers withheld criticism of the government, advising U.N. human rights officials not to publish U.N. estimates of the civilian death toll in the conflict, arguing that they were not convinced of their credibility, according to officials familiar with the discussions. In the end, Ban's diplomatic intervention achieved a brief weekend pause in the fighting but did little to stem to slaughter, which cost the lives of 7,800 to 20,000 civilians.

Ban says he won commitments from Sri Lankan leaders to improve conditions for displaced people and to pursue reconciliation, but his handling of such crises has raised questions among some U.N. diplomats about his viability for a second term.

Norway's U.N. ambassador, Mona Juul, wrote that Ban is a "spineless and charmless" leader who has failed to convey the U.N.'s "moral voice and authority," according to a confidential memo to Norway's foreign minister. Juul, whose husband, Terje Roed-Larsen, serves as one of Ban's Middle East envoys, sharply criticized Ban's handling of the



UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-moon

crises in Sri Lanka and Burma in the memo, which was first published in the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten.

"The Secretary-General was a powerless observer to thousands of civilians losing their lives and becoming displaced from their homes," Juul wrote of Ban's role in Sri Lanka. "The moral voice and authority of the Secretary-General has been missing."

Ban has been stung by the criticism and said he is striving to improve his performance. But he suggested that the criticism stemmed from a misunderstanding in the West of his Asian diplo-

matic approach. "We need to be able to respect the culture, tradition and leadership style of each and every leader," Ban, a former South Korean foreign minister, told reporters in a visit to Oslo on Monday. "I have my own charisma, I have my own leadership style."

## Spotlight' on Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, Ban and his advisers sought to perform a delicate balancing act, pressing the country's leader in private to halt the shelling of civilian zones, while avoiding an open confrontation with cautiously worded public statements about the violence.

Human rights advocates faulted Ban for not pressing hard enough to hold Sri Lanka accountable for its actions. Days after the war ended, the secretary general signed a joint agreement with President Rajapaksa committing Sri Lanka to pursue political reconciliation with ethnic Tamils and release hundreds of thousands of displaced ethnic Tamils in government-controlled camps.

In exchange, Ban dropped a U.N. push for an independent investigation into war crimes,

leaving it to Sri Lanka to determine whether its military was responsible for the deaths of thousands of civilians in the final offensive. Two days later, Sri Lankan diplomats, citing the agreement, quashed a proposal by the top U.N. human rights official to create an independent commission of inquiry to probe war crimes in Sri Lanka.

Some diplomats have defended Ban's handling of the crisis, saying he pushed far more aggressively to protect Sri Lankan civilians than did any government, including the United States, India, China, Russia and key European powers.

"He put a spotlight on what was happening in Sri Lanka," said John Sawers, Britain's U.N. ambassador. "So it's not perfect in Sri Lanka; far too many civilians got killed and there is still an outstanding problem with the civilians in the [Internally Displaced Persons] camps. But I believe Ban's engagement made the situation less bad than it would otherwise have been."

## Warning over Sphere standards in IDP camps as monsoon looms

Sphere standards at internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in northern Sri Lanka are being undermined due to overcrowding, say aid workers.



An example of washing water some residents have had to use - pic: IRIN

The Sphere Project, a collaboration of international NGOs and the Red Cross Movement to improve the quality of disaster response, outlines best practices in food aid, nutrition, health, water and sanitation and emergency shelter provision.

"We are missing Sphere standards by a long way, particularly in the WASH [water, sanitation and hygiene] cluster," David White, Oxfam's country director in Colombo, told IRIN, citing instances where some people were

going without water for washing for up to three days.

"We're not even close," said another international aid worker. "With the monsoon rains, it's going to get worse," he warned.

Close to 300,000 people now languish in 30 government camps in Vavuniya, Mannar, Jaffna and Trincomalee districts, after fleeing fighting between government forces and the now defeated Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who had been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland for more than two decades.

Many of the camps - which were hastily erected in the final days of the war after thousands fled south from former LTTE-controlled areas - suffer from severe overcrowding.

Most are located in and around the town of Vavuniya - the epicentre of one of the island nation's worst levels of displacement ever.

"Many of the camps now exceed their planned capacity," confirmed one international aid worker in Vavuniya.

Of the 246,000 IDPs in Vavuniya, more than 200,000 now stay in Menik Farm - a sprawling 809ha site about 50km outside the town, comprised of six separate zones and easily the most overcrowded.

This despite the fact that a

large percentage of them actually have families in the area they could stay with.

## Decongestion

Decongestion is now taking on an even greater sense of urgency.

"The issue has been recognized by the government already in late May during the UN Secretary-General's visit, as reflected in the joint statement made by President Rajapakse and [Ban Ki-moon], and work is ongoing to resettle people as well as to permit vulnerable people to leave," Neil Buhne, the UN resident representative in Colombo, said.

"Concerns about security are recognized by everyone, but from all my discussions with everyone involved with the camps - from government to UN to NGOs, everyone also recognizes that the sooner people can get back to their homes or with host families, the better."

"UNHCR [the UN Refugee Agency] and its shelter partners are supporting the government's decongestion efforts to ensure that the conditions in the emergency shelter sites reach international standards," said Elizabeth Tan, officer-in-charge for UNHCR Sri Lanka, which is working with the government to prepare the site as best as possible to withstand the upcoming monsoon season.



Upcoming monsoon rains are a serious source of concern

More than three months since the conflict ended, Zone two of Menik Farm continues to hold close to 55,000 - almost double its planned capacity.

"If those zones had the amount of people they were built for, we would be a lot closer to Sphere standards," Oxfam's White said.

In fact, in some parts of Menik Farm, a single latrine caters to up to 80 people [Sphere standards call for 20], while some tents designed for five were accommodating up to 14.

Yet according to Buhne, how close or how far Sphere standards could be met depended on the sector, as well as the location within the camps.

"Some of newly established small areas are close to or even meet some standards, while in the larger, longer-established sites there is more work to be done," he said.

"Camp conditions were gradually stabilizing until mid-August," he said, citing government efforts



More than 200,000 people live in Menik Farm

and those of international agencies since the last influx in late May.

"Schools [and] health clinics had been or were being established; access to water and sanitation had improved and most people now had the calorie intake they needed," he said.

Even so, significant challenges persist, highlighted and accentuated by the recent rains, he said.

"Last week's rains were a warning for us. We have to act and act soon," said an aid worker.

Set to arrive within a matter of weeks, the monsoon will sorely test the ability of the authorities and the aid community to cope.

"The international community is watching. We can't pretend we didn't know it was coming," she said, explaining that even if you took 50,000 people out of the camps tomorrow, once the monsoon arrives the camps would no longer be viable.

"The clock is now ticking," she said.

Report by UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ~ IRIN News

# Evidence of Sri Lankan War Crimes Surface

Footage of the Sri Lankan army callously executing Tamils, as shown on a reputable British news channel, has deeply troubled Tamil Canadians. The scenes on Britain's Channel 4 News have increased concerns about the safety of Tamils who are confined against their will in Sri Lanka's barbed-wire camps under strict military supervision. Their internment violates international norms and law. Many of these detainees have families and friends in Canada.

The footage features Tamils, who have been stripped naked and blindfolded, being killed. Eventually, the camera angle widens and shows several similar naked bodies lying in the dirt. Some move, many do not.

"The footage shows part of the truth the Sri Lankan government has been trying to hide for months," said Harini Sivalingham, policy director for the Canadian Tamil Congress. "These types of war crimes are what so many Tamil Canadians tried to warn the world about, but no one listened. The brutality and complete disregard for human life evidenced in these scenes shows how far Sri Lanka is from being anything close to a democracy."

Channel 4 News and BBC received the footage from Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka (JDS), a group that includes both Sinhalese and Tamils. The JDS is a group of journalists, writers, artists and human rights defenders who fled



persecution in Sri Lanka. The footage is said to have been filmed in January 2009.

In light of the treatment of Tamils in the video, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) is even more concerned about the security of camp detainees. The CTC believes the international community must enact tougher measures to press Sri Lanka into releasing them. With no independent monitors able to freely visit the camps, Amnesty International has said many people are unprotected and at risk from enforced disappearances, abductions, arbitrary arrest and sexual violence.

# Preventing further suffering in Sri Lanka

## Statement by British Conservative Party

100 days on from the conflict which blighted Sri Lanka for decades, William Hague has expressed serious concerns about the fate of the innocent civilians who are now residing in internment camps.

"Whilst we are glad that Sri Lanka is now free from the scourge of terrorism", he said, "we have repeatedly urged the Sri Lankan government to take all possible measures to prevent further suffering".

He called for UN and relief organisations to be given "full and unrestricted access to provide shelter, food, water, and medicine, and to oversee the screening process" - a call made all the more urgent by the onset of the monsoon season.

Hague also stressed the importance of the Sri Lankan government living up to its commitment to allow the people to return to their homes by the end of the year. "Their continued confine-



ment in camps will simply sow the seeds of discontent and may lead to renewed conflict in years to come. This would be a disastrous setback for the country when peace has been so hard won."

William is the Shadow Foreign Secretary. He was heavily involved in student politics and has been an MP since 1989.

# J.S. Tissainayagam sentenced to 20 years and justice is dead in Sri Lanka

## Statement by Asian Human Rights Commission:

The Asian Human Rights Commission is saddened, disappointed and shocked but not surprised at the judgment of the High Court of Colombo in sentencing J.S. Tissainayagam to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for a simple piece of writing which he had done and which was interpreted as aiding and abetting terrorism.

The AHRC is not surprised by this judgment because at the very inception of this case the AHRC pointed out that this is purely a political case, the first of its kind in which the accused, Mr. Tissainayagam's guilt or innocence was not an issue but an opportunity to send a message to society on the changed circumstances of the country where freedom of expression does not matter at all. That was the real aim of this case. It is the sort of prosecution that could have happened under the regime of Joseph Stalin through the prosecutor, Andrei Vyshinsky.

In Vyshinsky's trials the outcome was predetermined. The trials of the 1930s were known worldwide as show trials. Those actually accused were not really the targets of the proceedings. The accused were mere exhibits to be advertised before the rest of Russia in order to pass a message to the people about the fundamental beliefs that Stalin wanted to impose on society. Vyshinsky's biographer Arkady Vaksberg writes that the "purpose of the trial had not been to disgrace or, indeed, to annihilate some of the accused but to create a precedent and pave the way for a psychological attack on the population."

Tissainayagam has been selected for a show trial where there was not even any evidence to base a charge on. The particular passages which were arbitrari-



Sri Lankan prison guards escort journalist J.S. Tissainayagam out of the High Court premises in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Monday, Aug. 31, 2009-AP pic

ly selected from his writings did not represent any attempt to raise feelings of racism or to instigate people to violence on the basis of race. The text was selected as the pretext and there was no genuine thought in this prosecution at all.

What the case points to is the illusions of the liberals both in Sri Lanka and abroad who fail to see a persecution staged as a show trial. The illusion that somehow things may turn out and that there would be a fair trial was the comfort zone in which many people were resting, unwilling to accept that justice is dead in Sri Lanka and that the executive can manipulate and get whatever verdict it wants.

The greatest loser in this case is not J.S. Tissainayagam it is the justice system and the judiciary in Sri Lanka that has suffered the greatest loss which would be hard for it to overcome. Even this is not a huge surprise for most people in Sri Lanka. They know that justice has been dead for a long time in their country.

The Tissainayagam case will also remain the most glaring proof of the absence of freedom of expression in Sri Lanka. The memory of this case will shame so many journalists and media men in the country who have found it



possible to lick the very feet of the executive which has completely destroyed the freedom of expression in the country. Some have fought back and lost their lives and some finally fled for their own safety. But this has also created a paradise for those who live by their contribution to misinformation and suppression of freedoms.

We urge the local and international community to condemn the judgment and the sentence in Tissainayagam's case and to call for his unconditional release. We also urge the local and international community to grasp the reality that justice is dead in Sri Lanka and the freedom of expression and the media which has also been killed.

Justice and media freedom in Sri Lanka is like the phantom limb; a dream of an amputee who still believes that his limbs are intact. The reminder of the Tissainayagam case should always be associated with the image of the phantom limb.

(About AHRC: The Asian Human Rights Commission is a regional non-governmental organisation monitoring and lobbying human rights issues in Asia. The Hong Kong-based group was founded in 1984)



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## Hatton National Bank donates computers to Jaffna Public Library

Executive Director of Hatton National Bank (HNB), R. Thiyagarajah, officially handed over on Wednesday August 26th, a set of computers to Jaffna Public Library Chief Librarian, S. Thanabalasingham and Deputy Commissioner of Jaffna Municipal Council, K. Rajadurai for the benefit of school leavers in Jaffna peninsula. Meanwhile, a new branch of HNB was opened the same day in Point Pedro by R. Thiyagarajah. Senior Regional Manager of North East for HNB, A. V. Beedle, was present at the opening ceremony, sources in Jaffna said.

"These computers are being donated to develop computer technology knowledge among the students who leave schools and HNB considers this as one of its social responsibilities", R. Thiyagarajah said in a press meet conducted after handing over the computers.

"HNB will offer financial assistance to open 125 new libraries in Jaffna peninsula schools," he said.

"HNB has been functioning in Jaffna for the past 37 years. 22% of the saving deposits in HNB in the whole country is contributed by the Tamils of North and East and this is a good example for the saving habit of the Tamils," he added.

Thiyagarajah denied the accusation that the saving deposits of the Tamils are being used only to develop the South.

He pointed out that around three thousand million rupees had been issued in the last few years as loans for developing agriculture and fishing in Jaffna peninsula alone.

Due to the war it was only possible to give micro financial



HNB has been functioning in Jaffna for the past 37 years (pic: TamilNet)



HNB is to offer financial assistance to open 125 new libraries in Jaffna peninsula schools

help but now HNB is ready to release bigger loans for the development of agriculture, fishing and other investments, Thiyagarajah said.

He further said that it was matter of pride that HNB had been working along with the people of the peninsula sharing their lives even during the war.

HNB is prepared to improve and develop the possibilities of

obtaining loans for the people who had suffered unemployment and loss of livelihood during the last 30 years due to war, he added.

Thiyagarajah opened a new branch of HNB in Point Pedro Wednesday along with HNB North East Senior Regional Manager, A. V. Beedle.

[TN]

## Rouge Valley welcomes diabetes medical director

Physician hopes to help raise awareness of diabetes in community

The latest physician to join the Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) medical team hopes to help fight diabetes in the hospital's ethnically diverse patient community.

Dr. Farrukh Khan is the new medical director of the adult diabetes program at RVHS. The endocrinologist recently began seeing patients at both hospital campuses at Rouge Valley Centenary (RVC) in east Toronto and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering (RVAP) in the west Durham region.

"I am pleased to join the outstanding medical team here at Rouge Valley, and I look forward to helping the endocrinology and diabetes education services here in providing stellar patient care. I hope to help bring more awareness about diabetes to our patient community. We want to help conquer all forms of this disease, so that our patients can improve their quality of life. I want to help our patients to achieve that goal," says Dr. Khan.

Before joining RVHS, Dr. Khan served as chief of medicine at Chaleur Regional Hospital, a community hospital in Bathurst, New Brunswick. There, he was also medical director of the hospital's education affiliate program with the Joslin Diabetes Center, a leading diabetes care facility with clinics around the world, affiliated with Harvard Medical School.

"The medical team at Rouge Valley is thrilled with the addition of Dr. Khan. His background as an endocrinologist, exceptional training and expertise in diabetes treatment and control, and chronic disease management, will be a real asset to both our medical team, and to our patients," says Dr. Teraiza Yassa, program chief of medicine at RVC.

Dr. Khan joins endocrinologists Dr. John Sigalis and Dr. James Arnett, physicians already known at Rouge Valley for their leadership in diabetes education. Both will continue to provide consultations and medical support to diabetes patients at Rouge Valley.

Dr. Khan looks forward to seeing diabetes patients at both hospital campuses. He adds that while diabetes affects many different people, research has shown

that it is often more prevalent in ethnically diverse communities, similar to those of both Rouge Valley hospital campuses.

"Diabetes is a hard and difficult chronic disease that affects all aspects of a patient's life. I hope to use and build upon my expertise and experience so that we can better help the patients in our community to live with this chronic disease," says Dr. Khan.

Originally from Pakistan, Dr. Khan came to Canada eight years ago. He earned his medical degree at King Edward Medical School in Lahore, Pakistan, and completed a clinical and research fellowship in endocrinology at the Medical College of Virginia. Dr. Khan also completed an internship in internal medicine, as well as a residency in internal medicine, including being chief medical resident, at the University of Connecticut. He has also earned a number of awards for his work in endocrinology and diabetes medicine, including the Endocrinology Fellows Foundation Excellence Award, and the President's Poster from the American Diabetes Association.

Dr. Khan, who is married and has one young son, is also fluent in Urdu.

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

RVHS is an excellent acute care community hospital with many programs, including 24/7/365 emergency, cardiac care and mental health. Rouge Valley consists of several health sites, including two community hospital campuses: Rouge Valley Centenary in east Toronto; and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering in west Durham. Together, a team of physicians (224 general practitioners and 325 specialists), 1,000 nurses and many other professionals care for a broad spectrum of health conditions. Working in consultation and partnership with community members, other hospitals, health care organizations, the Central East Local Health Integration Network and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Rouge Valley continues to improve its programs and cater to the needs of the growing communities of east Toronto, Ajax, Pickering and Whitby.

## Canada well-positioned to provide flu vaccines on time

### VACCINE FOR H1N1 FLU VIRUS

As public health officials, intensive care specialists, and medical experts from Canada and abroad gathered in Winnipeg recently to discuss how to treat severe cases of H1N1 flu virus, Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq reinforced the important work the Government is doing to prepare for a major H1N1 vaccination campaign this fall.

"The Government of Canada will ensure that all Canadians who need and want the H1N1 vaccine will get it," said Minister Aglukkaq. "We have an accelerated approval process in place to ensure that we have a safe, effective vaccine available as quickly as possible."

Minister Aglukkaq reiterated



that the Canadian decision to use an adjuvanted vaccine, as recommended by the World Health Organization, will not result in any delay for Canadians who want to receive the vaccine. Current timelines indicate that the vaccine will be approved for use in Canada in

November 2009.

"In Canada, we are lucky that the issue is not whether we will have enough vaccine for everyone who needs it, but how quickly we can immunize everyone," said Dr. Butler-Jones, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer. "Those who

need it most will receive the vaccine first."

The Government of Canada is working with provinces, territories and experts in the medical and ethics fields to finalize guidance to identify those people who should receive the vaccine first. This work, in addition to clinical trial data on safety and efficacy, will help provinces and territories in rolling out their H1N1 immunization programs.

Minister Aglukkaq and Dr. Butler-Jones provided this latest update from the PHAC-hosted conference Severe H1N1 Disease: Preventing Cases, Reducing Mortality. This international meeting will help strengthen important linkages between health care professionals dealing with severe cases of H1N1 flu infection and public health experts engaged in planning for the possible second wave of H1N1 in the fall.

# Breathe, Hold and Relax

We've all heard about the importance of leading a healthy active lifestyle. Many of us have increased our physical fitness, incorporating strengthening and aerobic activity into our daily routine. However, the one component of a thorough exercise routine that is often forgotten is the addition of stretching. The process of stretching involves deliberate elongation of muscle, thereby increasing muscle flexibility. Since muscles often cross different joints, the process of stretching also increases joint range of motion. The benefits are many. It increases the circulation in our body, adding nourishment

By Mithura Anandarajah, PT  
Registered Physiotherapist

to muscle groups and removing waste byproducts. By stretching frequently, you maintain proper posture and coordination. For example, if you were to sit and work at your desk intensely for eight hours, you probably would end up slumped over, with your head forward and shoulders tight. By stretching throughout your work day, you elongate the affected muscles and maintain proper posture. Stretching also provides stress relief. You will notice that as stress increases, our muscles tighten. We feel stiff and sore.

The process of stretching just comes naturally to us, as we try to shrug, twist or turn. In reality, we're stretching.

Like any exercise, the process of stretching should be done correctly and thoroughly. A warm-up increases the circulation and facilitates the process. Stretching when you are cold can result in a pulled muscle or injury. Hold each stretch for approximately 30 seconds and hold it at the end point. Avoid bouncing the stretch. Stretching should be

pain-free. The key to increasing flexibility is to stretch frequently not intensely. Relax and breathe freely. Make sure that stretches are done both on the right and left sides of your body. You are more susceptible to injury when there are muscle imbalances, whether it is a difference in strength or flexibility. Also the best results are achieved when stretching after physical activity.

Stretching should be done at all ages. As you get older, muscles tighten and movement or range of motion becomes limited. What used to be easy tasks like unzipping a dress or reaching for the top shelf, now becomes a little more difficult. A regular stretching routine prevents this from happening. At a younger age, stretching enhances athletic performance and prevents injuries. Once injured, muscles quickly tighten as scar tissue develops. Incorporating stretching into a rehabilitation program



facilitates recovery. It can be done throughout the day, while sitting at your desk or in front of the television. If you are at the gym, it can easily be done between strengthening sets.

To develop an appropriate stretching program you can consult with your Physiotherapist or a trainer at the gym. Sign up for a stretching class at your local gym or community centre. It is important that stretches are done correctly and pain-free, with appropriate postural awareness. Trying out a yoga class will also incorporate stretches and flexibility. Remember that stretching should feel good. So breathe, hold and relax.



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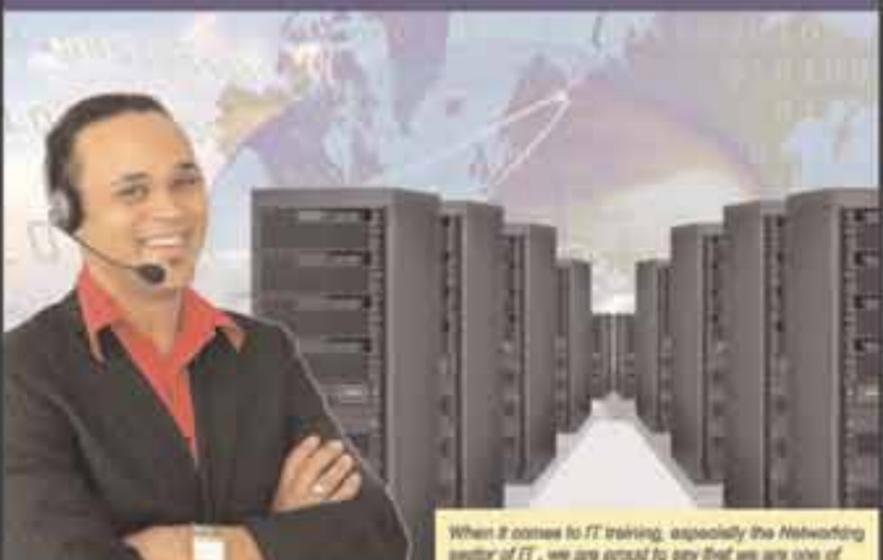
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# Tradition bound Udappu, the charm of a Tamil village

“Udappu” is situated between the Dutch Canal in the East, Indian Ocean in the West, Poonaitty village in the North and Pinkatti village in the South. According to some reports, that there was a flood in this area earlier, and it was called “Udaippu” afterwards. Another report says that people were looking for pure water and sea side, while searching for such place they found “Udaippankarai”. Later, the name derived from “Udaippu” to “Udaippankarai” to “Udappu”, which is currently being called.

This is a traditional Tamil fishing hamlet, which is situated 150 kilometers away from Sri Lanka’s commercial capital Colombo. A sandy stretch road which is about six kilometers off the Colombo to Puttlam main highway takes to Udappu. It is located on a tip of rectangular shape land between Mundal lake and the sea. Udappu’s current population is 15,000. It’s believed that their ancestors came from Akka Madam and Thangachchi Madam in Rameshwaram in Southern India in 1630, and settled down in Udappu. This small fishing village has a very strong tradition and custom, which is being followed very strictly by the people of Udappu upto now. The fishing folk of this pristine coastal village has a different custom compared to the other fisher folk in the country. They still follow the same tradition which is being followed in Rameshwaram for weddings, funerals and temple festivals. Drama and theatre and folk songs play a major role while observing these traditions. The vibrant tradition keeps the families close to each other.

It is said that due to some ethnic tension in 16th Century, 18 families from Udappu went to Aanai Vaasal and Karaiyaar Kudiyiruppu in Katpitty in 7 fishing boats. The portraits of these 7 fishing boats are drawn on the wall of Sri Veerapththirakali Amman temple in Udappu. The fishing boats are identified as “Sinadappan Thoni”, “Sinna Thoni”, “Mugaanthiram Thoni”, “Kappanaa Thoni”, “Vaavaa Thoni”, and “Poththi Thoni”. And those 18 families are known as “Ampalakaaran”, “Sinnadappanpuram”, “Kathiran Sammaattipuram”, “Sinnaiyanpuram”, “Kaamapuram”, “Aavaththaaarpuram”, “Pachchaiyappanpuram”, “Seruvanththaaarpuram”, “Moosaapuram”, “Paasamandaadi Kudumbam”, “Muththupillai-puram”, “Palliyar Kudumbam”, “Sittampuram”, “Sinnaandipuram”, “Kottaavaariyaar Kudumbam, and “Moovar Kudumbam”.

Most of them are fishermen, some do farming or small business such as owning a grocery shop or tailor shop or a telephone booth or an eating house. And some are vegetable sellers or meat sellers. The people of Udappu read and recite the Mahabharatham epic in Tamil. The “Aadi Vizha Mahotsavam” of the Rukmani Sathyapama Sametha Sri Paarthasaarathy Thirupathathevi Devasthanam is based on the popular epic Mahabharatham, which lasts for 18 days. Dance and drama are performed during these days to attract the devotees and make them understand the epic better. The whole village comes alive during the festival. Udappu is usually known as a very calm and quiet place.



Drawings of the seven boats. The drawings are placed on the wall of the Sri Veerapaththirakali Amman temple

People of Udappu are very entertaining and hospitable. The first invitation that they always extend to a visitor is “Come to our house and have meals”. Then the conversation

(pitiless or rough devotion) towards the Goddess”. They say that they are willing to go through any pain in order to fulfill her (Goddess’s) wishes. They gather in groups to carry out the rituals. Most of the men are fisher folks. They are known for their hard work and dedication. Women of Udappu are very passive and soft-spoken. Men and women of Udappu are very spiritual, and they observe the knit tradition very carefully. The people of Udappu are very proud of their more than 350 years old unique and elegant tradition. The people of Udappu insist that they neither belong to the North and East of Sri Lanka nor to the hill country. They always say that, they are different from the rest of the Tamil community in the country.



calm and quiet place

follows with several other invitations such as “Come and stay with us in our house”, “Please feel free to ask anything that you need”, “We have made these special curries for you, because you are a pure vegetarian”, “Please let us know when

They mostly worship Sri Thirupathai Amman, Sri Kaali Amman and Sri Maari Amman. These three Goddesses are considered to be the Kula Theivam (Family Guardian Deities) of Udappu. A strict vegetarian regimen is observed during



a busy alley in Udappu

will you be here next time, so that we can make your stay comfortable”, “Take some fresh drum sticks and fresh Jasmine flowers with you when you return to your house in Colombo”. They do not show any difference between a visitor and a stranger, they treat both equally. It is a beauty of the people in Udappu that, the invitation is always extended wholeheartedly.

The men in Udappu say that “They have “Murattu Bhakthi”

the time of the temple festival.

If a man marries outside Udappu, he will be detached from the family and community, and his mustache will be shaven completely to humiliate him. The custom is called “Meesai Kattal”. As a result hardly any men marry outside his village, and the entire population believes that they need to maintain the speciality. Men folks respect the women folks. The



Udappu men, relaxing in the shade at midday

men extend their extra care and support to the women during the festival time, because they feel that men from outside visit Udappu

them come annually during the festival time to take part in fire walking. This is when most of the match making takes place in Udappu!



An early morning scene in Udappu

during the festival, and the unique culture needs to maintained and protected, and there should not be any room left for misbehaviors and misconducts.

There are 30 Muslim families currently living in Udappu. Sinhala traders from Aaraachchikattu, Aaandigama and Vijayakattupeththa come daily to the main market in Udappu to sell vegetables. They come very early in the morning in a lorry and return to their respective villages after the business. The primary vocation of Udappu was tobacco cultivation, the tobacco plants were affected due to some disease. Thereafter, the people of Udappu began to concentrate on prawn hatchery. There is a couple of medical doctors and engineers produced from Udappu.

A couple of visitors from Jaffna shared their experiences while being in Udappu this year. Most of them said that, “We feel like Udappu is their second home next to Jaffna. And, we like to retire in Udappu”. It gives the similar feeling of being in Jaffna, surrounded by coconut and palmyrah trees, mild breeze with the sweet sound of the palm leaves, even though it is hot. The fences for the houses are woven neatly with either coconut or palmyrah leaves. The houses hardly have brick or cement walls. Most of the houses are shady and cool.

The people of Udappu like to remain different, while some of the young men left the village to seek employments in foreign countries. Some of



Devotees walk towards the Rukmani Sathyapama Sametha Sri Paarthasaarathy Thirupathathevi Devasthanam in Udappu, the hot sun



Goddess Thirupathathevi is seated in front of the fire pit, on the annual fire walking festival of Rukmani Sathyapama Sametha Sri Paarthasaarathy Thirupathathevi Devasthanam, Udappu on 5th of August 2009

By Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai  
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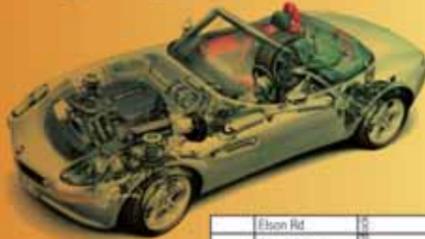
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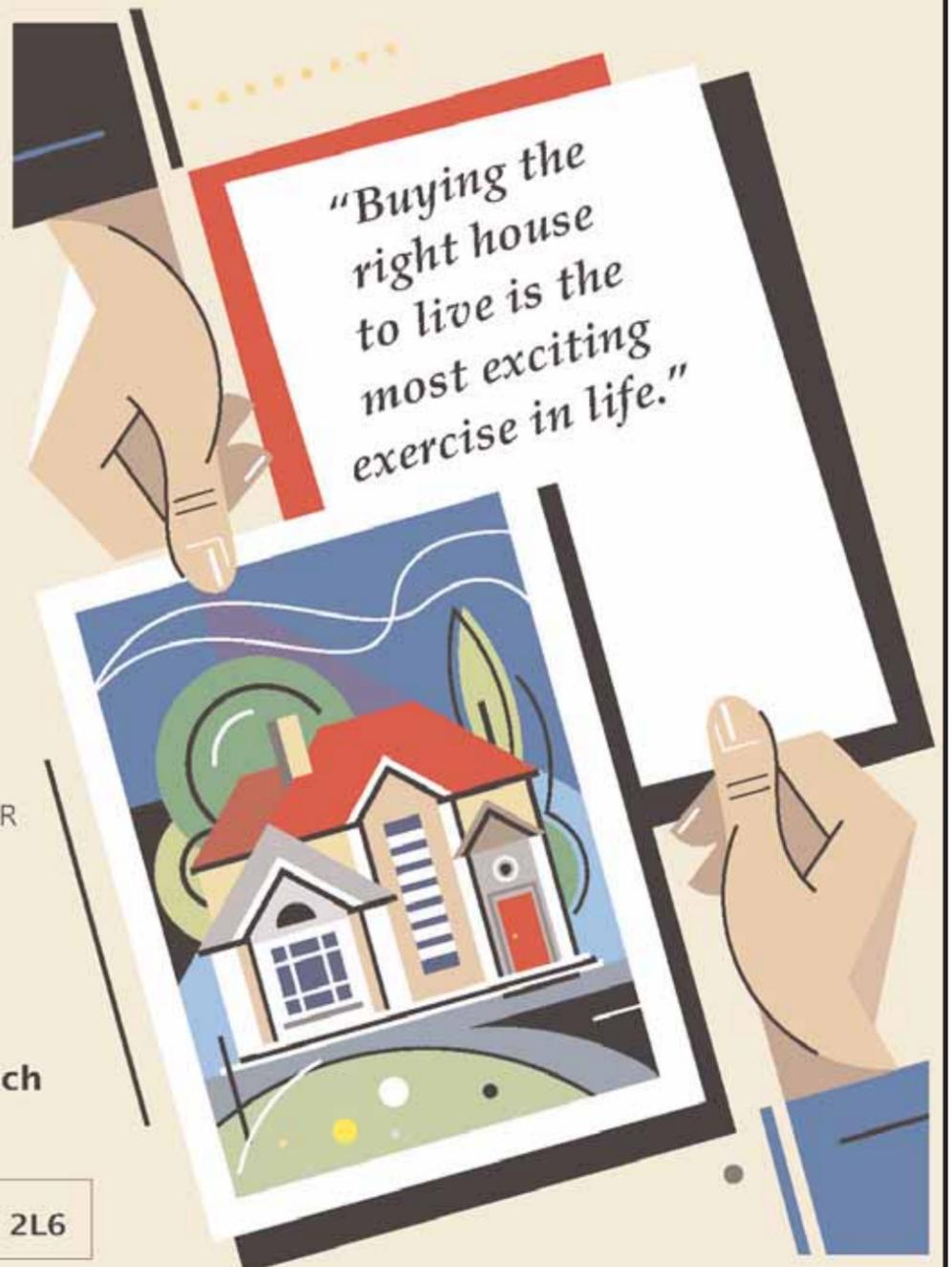
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Oak Ridges - Markham

PAUL  
CALANDRA

## Op/Ed

By Paul Calandra, Conservative MP for Oak Ridges-Markham

Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff has recently launched a series of attacks directed at the Canadian government, criticizing our relations with China.

Mr. Ignatieff was scheduled to leave today for what he had deemed an "imperative" international trip to Beijing and Shanghai, in an attempt at 'salvaging' Canadian-Chinese economic relations.

I find it quite interesting that merely days after this bold declaration; the Liberal leader cancelled his scheduled week-long trip to China. The reason being: to try and force an unwanted and largely unpopular fall election.

What Mr. Ignatieff doesn't know is that the Canadian government has been extremely active in its relations with China and is deeply committed to building a forward-looking, principled and meaningful relationship with China.

The Prime Minister has in fact met with President Hu at several multilateral meetings, and since coming to office in 2006, our government has undertaken 18 Ministerial level visits to China, including four high level ministerial delegations focussing on building upon our trade interests. My colleagues, the Minister of International Trade and the Minister of Finance, went to China in April and August 2009 respectively.

To increase our presence in China we have opened two new trade offices

(in Chengdu and Shenzhen), with four additional offices in Nanjing, Qingdao, Shenyang and Wuhan expected to open later this year.

We've also announced Asia-Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative infrastructure projects worth almost \$2.5 billion, including federal contributions of over \$900 million, to ensure that doors to new trade with China and Asia are opened.

I am pleased to say that between 2006 and the year 2008, exports to China have grown by 33.1%.

Our government is working hard to boost our commercial presence in Asia and build on successful initiatives such as the Asia-Pacific Gateway. China is a key business partner for Canada and strengthening our relationship is a priority of the government's commerce strategy.

The government's policy toward China has not changed: defend Canadian values with a strong stance on human rights, while also working to strengthen the trade and investment ties. Canadian values and commercial relations are not mutually exclusive goals. Our comprehensive relationship involves engagement in both areas, and we are confident that we can do so effectively.

With that being said, our trade with China continues to grow. In the first nine months of 2007, our exports to China increased 36 per cent over the same period in 2006.

We're turning the corner after 12 years of Liberal inaction. But we are aware that we need to do more. Our \$1 billion investment into the Asia-Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative will create the platform we need for business between our two countries to flourish.

The Minister of Trade and the Asia-Pacific Gateway recently announced that Canadian exports of goods and services to almost all of Canada's major trading markets increased last year, with the one exception of Japan.

Canada's merchandise exports increased by double-digits for each of the "BRIC" emerging markets in 2008: Brazil (71%), Russia (30%), India (35%) and China (10%).

The reality is that since taking office in 2006, the Harper government has focused on improving Canadians access to Markets around the world. Our Economic Action Plan is working and Canada remains strong despite the global economic downturn.

We will continue to focus on our economy and unlike the Liberal leader; we will promote our success, celebrate Canadian business and labour and continue to prosper in Canada. We should celebrate Canada as the best place to live, work and invest, and not talk down our amazing success. I hope the Liberal leader reflects on this as Parliament resumes in a little over a week.

# Concerned Citizens Forum of South Asia: Road map for relief of Sri Lanka war displaced

BANGALORE-A delegation of eminent citizens and representatives of civil rights organisations met Mr. S.M. Krishna, Union Minister of External Affairs here on Aug13th and urged the Government of India to ensure speedy rehabilitation of internally displaced people (IDPs) and other war-affected people in Sri Lanka.

Under the banner of the Concerned Citizens Forum of South Asia, a new umbrella group that advocates human rights and humanitarian values in the region, the delegation met Mr. Krishna at his residence here this morning. The group submitted a 'A roadmap for relief, resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced and war-affected people of Sri Lanka by the Government of Sri Lanka'

The delegation requested the minister to kindly use his good offices to take up this burning humanitarian issue with the Government of Sri Lanka and ensure relief and rehabilitation of the affected people before the monsoon sets in.

The delegation felt that the monsoon would unleash another humanitarian catastrophe in the crowded camps that house about 150,000 people and spread epidemics and misery. There are many wounded and disabled persons in the camps.

In response, Mr Krishna informed the delegation that the Prime Minister had expressed his willingness to donate an additional sum of Rs.500 crores towards relief in Sri Lanka.

However, he shared the delegation's concern that aid cannot be left to fully under the control of Government of Sri Lanka, but it has to be monitored. The Government of India had earlier announced an aid package of Rs 500 crore.

The minister assured the delegation that he would seek a realistic report from the Indian High

Commissioner to Sri Lanka and act upon it without delay.

Some of the other issues that were raised by the delegation were related to:

o The resettlement of the IDPs in their places of origin or choice, as promised by the Sri Lankan Government, within 180 days.

o The Rs.500 crore aid declared by Govt of India, towards relief and rehabilitation of IDPs to be channeled through humanitarian agencies and the Government of Sri Lanka should be made accountable through proper monitoring by independent agencies.

o The issue of immediate family reunion was raised as members of the same family are often scattered in different camps. The main concern is about children being separated from their parents.

o A request was also made to stall the Sri Lankan designs to change the ethnic, demographic, and cultural patterns of the northern region by resettling Sinhalese there with incentives.

o The delegation also urged the Govt of India to prevail upon the Govt of Sri Lanka to demilitarise the IDP camps and hand over their administration to the Civilian authorities.

o The delegation also requested the minister to prevail upon the Government of Sri Lanka to provide free access to international aid agencies and the media and the civil rights groups to reach out to the needs of the IDPs.

o In view of providing livelihood, the delegation requested the minister to prevail upon the Government of Sri Lanka to lift the ban on restriction of fishing in the coastal areas.

The appeal was signed and endorsed by eminent personalities and organizations, including:

-Mr. Mangala Samaraweera, Member of Parliament (Sri Lanka), Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Sri Lanka;

-Ms. Jayamala, President, Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce, Bangalore;

-Dr.K.Sekar, Professor and Head of the Department of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, Bangalore;

-Dr. V.Vijayakumar, UNHCR Chair on Refugee Law and Professor of Law, National Law School of India University, Bangalore;

-Prof. E. J. Puttiah, Department of Environmental Science, Kuvempu University;

-Dr.M.G.Krishnan, Professor and Head of the Dept of Political Science, Bangalore University, Bangalore;

-Dr.Mathew Aerthaiyil SJ, Director, Indian Social Institute, Bangalore;

-Dr.Ambrose Pinto SJ, Principal, St.Joseph's College, Bangalore;

-G. Deenadayalan, The Other Media, New Delhi;

-South India Cell for Human Rights Education and Monitoring (SICHREM ), Bangalore; FEDINA, Bangalore;

-Pipal Tree, Fireflies, Bangalore; Kerala Private College Teachers Association, Thiruvananthapuram.

-People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) India;

-APCLC (Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties, Committee);

-CPDR (Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights),

-Mumbai; Organisation for Protection of Democratic Rights(OPDR), Andhra Pradesh;

-HRF (Human Rights Forum) Andhra Pradesh; Confederation of Human Rights (COHR), Manipur;

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-National Alliance of People's Movements NAPM; and

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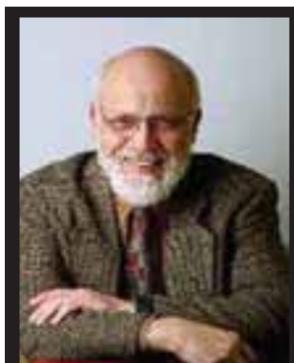


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# Deepak Obhrai condemns IRB decision to grant refugee status to South African based on his colour

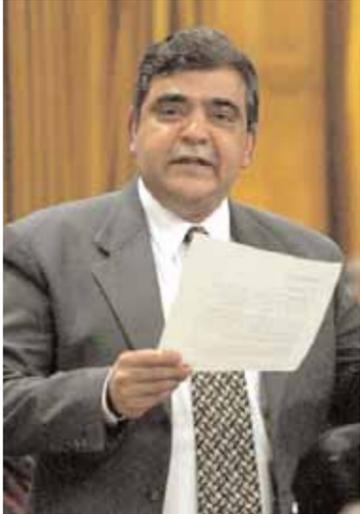
Deepak Obhrai condemns IRB decision to grant refugee status to South African based on his colour

(CALGARY) The following statement is not made as a parliamentary secretary, but as an immigrant to Canada from Africa and is my personal reflection.

"I am shocked and outraged at the decision by Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) to grant refugee status to South African Brandon Huntley based on his claim that he was persecuted in his native country because of his colour.

"Having grown up in Africa and witnessed the devastating effects of apartheid, in this case against blacks and Indians, it is beyond my understanding how a Canadian institution makes a decision on racial basis.

"This decision by the IRB shows a serious lack of judgment and is completely devoid of ground reality. Furthermore, it is in total contradiction to the Canadian values that all immigrants have come to respect. All



across the world today, people and governments are working hard to build bridges of understanding between communities. The same optimism is prevalent in South Africa, where I attended the inauguration of President Jacob Zuma this spring. There I witnessed firsthand efforts made by all South Africans to put the legacy of hate based on colour behind them. In Canada there is no room for decisions to be made based on a person's colour."

# Parliamentary Secretary Obhrai meets with members of the Somali-Canadian Community

On August 20th, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deepak Obhrai, held a roundtable with members of the Greater Toronto Area's Somali-Canadian community. The case of Ms. Suaad Hagi Mohamud was at the forefront of the discussion.

The purpose of this meeting was for our government to listen to leaders of the Somali-Canadian community, and to exchange ideas about the issues of concern to the Somali community in general. The issue of Ms Suaad Hagi Mohamud was raised, as were some of the public's concerns arising out of what has so far

been made public about this case.

We continue to take this matter very seriously and we are all relieved that Ms. Mohamud is back on Canadian soil. Many questions remain to be answered. This is why both Minister of Public Safety Peter Van Loan and Minister of Foreign Affairs Lawrence Cannon have asked officials for a full account of what took place regarding this case. We will closely examine what in fact occurred. One of the recommendations arising out of the roundtable meetings was that this process be undertaken swiftly, and we are working to this end.

The Government of Canada



values all of its citizens, and we always aim to ensure that all Canadians travelling outside of Canada receive the proper support of our missions abroad. In fact, in 2008, Consular Services provided over 1.3 million consular-related services to Canadians in some 150 countries.

Meetings like the one held today in Toronto are part of maintaining a dialogue between the Government of Canada and our various local communities. I sincerely thank those with whom Mr Obhrai met today for their comments and suggestions.

# GOVERNMENT OF CANADA TO HELP LONG-TERM WORKERS WHEN PARLIAMENT RESUMES

The Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture), the Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, on behalf of the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, the Honourable Diane Finley, announced on Sept 7th, that the Government will introduce measures early in the fall session that will help long-tenured workers who have lost their jobs because of the global recession.

This will be an important step

in helping Canadian workers who have had steady employment and contributed to our economy for years and have become unemployed by no fault of their own," said Minister Blackburn. "These measures will help ensure that these long-tenured workers who have paid into the EI system for years are provided the help they need while they search for new employment."

"These measures will help Canadians who have worked hard



and paid taxes their whole lives and have found themselves in economic hardship and need a hand up," said Minister Finley.

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by P Rajanayagam

(Text of the tribute by, P. Rajanayagam, Editor of 'Tamil Times', on behalf of Upali's friends and comrades at his funeral on 3 September 2009)

We are gathered here today to remember, pay tribute and bid farewell to our friend, colleague and comrade, Upali Cooray, whose untimely death on 21st August 2009 has grieved us all.

Upali's professional qualifications included a BSc (Hons) in Economics (London), LLB Hons (London) and MA in Business Law at London Guildhall University.

Called to the Bar in 1974, Upali practised as a Barrister. Upali was also a Senior Lecturer in Law at London Metropolitan University and taught in many areas including Immigration Law and Comparative Labour Law.

#### Upali Cooray

As a committed human rights lawyer, Upali has worked tirelessly for the unrepresented in Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom. Upali's practice has included a large amount of cases in Immigration, Employment, Criminal, Housing and Family Law.

My association with Upali spans a period of over fifty years. Upali, by his natural inclinations and ideological persuasion was the classical version of "the Leftist" fighting for causes and defending cases that others would not touch.

Like many of us belonging to his generation, Upali cut his political teeth in the Sama Samaja movement, beginning as a youth leaguer, then being a member, and later playing leading roles in political and trade union struggles.

The 1960's were traumatic times for the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), and for that matter the entire left and working class movement in Sri Lanka. When the majority of the leadership of the Party began to embrace the strategy of coalition politics, it was resisted and opposed by the Left Tendency within the Party to which Upali and I belonged. When the LSSP, at its historic two-day conference in June 1964, decided by majority vote to enter into coalition politics, those of the

Left Tendency, which was at that time led by Edmund Samarakkody, Bala Tampo, Merryl Fernando and V. Karalasingham, broke away from the LSSP and founded the LSSP(R). Among others, Upali and I were also elected to the Central Committee of the new party.

There is no doubt that the decision of the LSSP and the Communist Party of Sri Lanka (CP) in 1964 to enter into coalition politics determined the fate and future of not only these parties, but also the entire left and working class politics in the country. These parties from the 1940s had been powerful bastions on the Left having substantial support with branches and youth leagues functioning throughout the length and breadth of the country. They had under their political leadership and control almost the entire working class movement. These parties had well acclaimed leaders with intellect and stature who were acknowledged as political giants even by their opponents. Even at the worst of times, these parties between them were able to win 15 to 20 seats in parliament. However, today these parties have become a pale shadow of their long, powerful and glorious past having insignificant impact on the politics of the island nation. Would these parties have suffered this fate had they avoided the strategy of coalition politics and continued to remain as champions of the Left fighting the cause of the oppressed and marginalised is a question that is worth pondering.

Upali was one of the founding members of the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE) in July, 1979 of which Fr Paul Caspersz was the President. It was founded in the context of rising violence particularly in Jaffna where the military had been deployed, Emergency rule had been imposed and the draconian provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act had been invoked leading to widespread and gross human rights violations.

Upali "was one of the moving spirits in MIRJE and a key organizer of many of its activities. He was a co-author with Paul Caspersz and me of the first MIRJE publication, "Emergency'79", the first publica-



tion to deal with the human rights violations in Jaffna that began in 1979." (Rajan Philips)

Another report in the form of a booklet titled "What happened in Jaffna: Days of Terror" published by MIRJE graphically details of uncontrolled violence including arson that was unleashed in Jaffna May 1981 in the course of which the Jaffna public market and its shopping centre, the TULF office, the residence of the then Jaffna MP Mr V Yogeswaran and most tragically the Jaffna Public Library were set ablaze which was described by Sri Lanka's most famous Bibliographer Ian Goonetillake as an exercise in "cultural incineration"

Though well versed in the theoretical concepts of Marxism, Upali was not dogmatic. He was the quintessential political activist and campaigner agitating for causes he believed in. Upali was always in the vanguard of struggles of the oppressed people all over the world and played prominent roles in anti-colonialist, anti-capitalist, anti-war and anti-racist campaigns.

As the ethnic conflict escalated Sri Lanka, there was massive proliferation of human rights abuses including detention without trial, torture, extra-judicial executions and involuntary disappearances. It was during this period that Upali became one of the leading figures who set up many campaigning organisations in the UK such as the "Ceylon Solidarity Forum", "Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners", "Friends of the Disappeared", and the Committee for Democracy and Justice in Sri Lanka".

In regard to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, Upali firmly rejected the strategy of war and violence and forcefully argued for negoti-

ated political settlement that recognised the legitimate rights of all nationalities. He denounced and campaigned against violations of human and democratic rights, political assassinations and other excesses for which successive Sri Lankan governments and the LTTE were responsible.

Above all, Upali was a man of action. He believed in the capacity of the downtrodden people to make a better world by transforming the exploitative socio-economic and political conditions to which they were subjected. Believing that organising, educating and empowering of the oppressed people was the key to their emancipation, Upali helped to creating alternative institutions. He helped in setting up a Women's Centre and a Legal Advice Centre in the Katunayaka Free Trade Zone. He set up a Resource Centre for Community Groups with modern printing machinery and internet technologies to help community groups in mass communication. He also set up another Centre in Balangoda providing for a meeting place for Tea plantation workers. He facilitated the setting up a charity "Lanka Care" to enable bright students from poor backgrounds to further their education by the provision of financial assistance.

One of his longstanding comrades, Rajan Philips, recalls an incident to illustrate Upali's commitment to those who have been wronged or whose rights have been violated: "Once riding his

motorcycle in Ratmalana, he saw a man beating up his wife on the road. He stopped the bike and scared the hell out of the bully until he promised that he would never abuse his wife again. Upali was the first male feminist I came across and I can say that he was a role model to other men in shedding the convenient shackles of patriarchy and male chauvinism."

Upali would have celebrated his 70th birthday on the 17th of this month. Sadly it was not to be. No amount of tributes to Upali would compensate for the irretrievable loss his wife Sylvia, son Alex, and daughters Samantha and Jasmine have suffered. May they be consoled that many of Upali's compatriots will cherish his memory and his services for ever.

Even in death, Upali stands tall as he has been throughout his life, a courageous stalwart of the Left and the valiant champion of the oppressed and marginalised. The casket containing his mortal remains, at his own request, is draped in the red flag with the hammer and sickle and the humanist service that is being performed today profoundly demonstrates 'the unrepentant Marxist' that Upali has been until his death.

Today, we bow our heads and salute Upali in celebration of his life and service to humanity which he performed with courage, conviction and dedication.

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# US Tamils mourn passing of Senator Kennedy

“The loss of Sen. Kennedy is particularly grave for Tamils at this time when hope is hard to find. Tamil Americans take comfort always in his inspiring words ‘...the work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives, and the dream shall never die.’”, says a recent media release by The US Tamil Political Action Council (USTPAC), on mourning the passing away of the United States Senator from Massachusetts, Sen. Edward Kennedy.

It added, “Our members from Massachusetts who were his constituents and supported him in many elections are particularly filled with sadness at his loss.”

The media release further said:

Sen. Kennedy for many years carried the torch of tolerance, an appreciation for diversity and an understanding of the need for the respect for democracy and human rights not just

here in the US, but also in the rest of the world. Standing for these values has been particularly important during the all-or-nothing periods of the Cold War and its successor, the War on Terror, when fear and hatred of the ‘other’ threatened to overwhelm these core American beliefs.

According to Sen. Kennedy, “Ultimately, America’s answer to the intolerant man is diversity, the very diversity which our heritage of religious freedom has inspired.” These are important words both for America and many conflict-ridden parts of the world, including Sri Lanka.

We echo Amnesty International USA’s statement that “the world has lost an active supporter of human rights around the globe, especially in the United States. He worked tirelessly on behalf of people whose voices were never heard, whose plights were hidden from view and whose well-being was

ignored... From advancing reforms on immigrant detention, to championing healthcare as a right for all Americans, to pushing for torture victims’ relief, to pressing for humanitarian aid for refugees around the world including the most recent conflict in Sri Lanka, to defending the rule of law, Senator Kennedy always knew and acted to end the misery of those who were suffering... [The Kennedy family legacy of helping the disempowered remains vital and vibrant.”

The 300,000 Tamils interred indefinitely in 21st century concentration camps in Sri Lanka will miss Sen. Kennedy’s concern, as will all Tamil Americans.



President John F. Kennedy (R), is pictured with his brothers, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and Senator Edward M. Kennedy (C), outside the Oval Office at the White House in this picture taken on August 28, 1963. U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy, a towering figure in the Democratic Party who took the helm of one of America’s most fabled political families after two older brothers were assassinated, died on August 26, 2009 at age 77, his family said.

## Late US Senator’s Memoir Talks of Personal, Public Tragedies

In his much anticipated autobiography, the late U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy discusses his public and personal tragedies, including the 1969 car accident that killed a female passenger.

The New York Times says it has obtained a copy of the memoir, True Compass, which is scheduled to be released on September 14. The veteran lawmaker died August 25 at the age of 77, after a year-long battle with brain cancer.

In July 1969, Kennedy drove off a bridge

on Chappaquiddick Island, off the Massachusetts coast. He managed to escape, but his passenger, Mary Jo Kopechne was found dead in the submerged car.

The Times says Kennedy writes that he was dazed and panicked in the minutes and hours after the accident, but called his actions “inexcusable.” He did not report the accident until after Kopechne’s body was discovered the next morning.

He said he made “terrible decisions” that night that haunted him the rest of his life.

Kennedy pleaded guilty to leaving the scene of an accident.

In the book, he also candidly discusses his years of “self-destructive drinking,” especially after the 1968 assassination of his brother, Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

Edward Kennedy says Robert grieved so deeply over the 1963 assassination of their older brother, President John F. Kennedy, that it nearly became a “tragedy within a tragedy.”

The younger Kennedy says he always ac-

cepted the findings of a special investigation into the late president’s murder, which concluded the accused assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, acted alone.

Edward Kennedy was buried Saturday, August 29th near his older brothers at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington.

Much of the material in the book comes from hours of recordings for an oral history project he was doing with the University of Virginia since 2004, as well as five decades of notes taken by Senator Kennedy. [voa news]

## Brain Cancer May Not Always Mean Death

By Carol Pearson

The recent death of Senator Edward Kennedy made many people more aware of brain cancer, in particular malignant gliomas, the aggressive form of brain cancer that ended Senator Kennedy’s life.

Malignant gliomas are the most common type of brain cancer. Few patients survive more than a year and a half after diagnosis.

At Duke University, Dr. John Sampson says the poor outcome is partly due to the many different types of cells in brain cancers.

“While one cell may be susceptible to chemotherapy and another susceptible to radiation, there may be a third cell that is susceptible to neither of those standard therapies,” Dr. Sampson said.

Some doctors hold out hope, if not for a cure, for a longer life.

VOA reported earlier that Dr. Marcus Bredel at Northwestern University has identified certain genes that may help some patients



There are many types of cells in brain cancer, which could hamper treatment

survive longer, and other genes within the tumor that resist treatment and continue growing. “We were able to predict the survival of glioblastoma (brain cancer) patients in a couple of populations across the United States,” he said.

Twenty-four-year old P. J. Lukac is one of the researchers. He has glioblastoma, the deadliest form of



P. J. Lukac

brain cancer. “When I started in the lab it was a very surreal experience because they talk about uniform fatality, they talk about inevitable recurrences of the cancer, and that kind of just hits you,” Lukac said. But he is also hopeful. “I think in my lifetime we will see glioblastoma become a chronic and manageable disease,” he added.

Surgery is still the preferred option to remove as much of the tumor as possible. But a new treatment involves using fiber-optic laser probes placed inside the brain tumor.

With a burning hot laser, doctors can destroy cancerous tissue they may not be able to reach during conventional surgery.

Doctors Gene Barnett and Steven Jones use fiber optic lasers at the Cleveland Clinic.

“This [the procedure] allows us to steer the laser in different directions, to treat larger areas of tumor and protect normal brain,” Dr. Barnett said.

“We can monitor the temperature rise in the tumor second by second while we’re scanning the patient. And better than that, we can see where we are killing the tumor,” explained Dr. Jones.

Senator Edward Kennedy (February 22, 1932 – August 25, 2009) In this Nov. 17, 2008 file photo, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy returns to Capitol Hill in Washington, after having brain surgery.

“The beauty of the system, is that it allows us to turn off the laser just when the heat wave would reach the



point where it would cause harm to normal tissue,” Dr. Barnett said.

Vaccines are also in clinical trials. The vaccines could help the body’s immune system attack the brain cancer cells.

“There are studies to date with our vaccine. It appears patients are surviving at least twice as long as we expected,” Dr. Sampson said.

Ryan DeGrand receives a vaccine once a month for his brain cancer. He has now survived five years. “The vaccine to me ... is a way for me to stay the way that I am today,” he said.

Researchers are also experimenting with drugs to choke off the blood supply to brain cancers. Initial studies show they can shrink the tumors by up to 60 percent.

Many doctors say using several treatments in combination soon after diagnosis will probably be the best way to fight brain cancer.

[voa news]

## President Obama Remembers Senator Kennedy as Colleague, Mentor, Friend



U.S. President Barack Obama delivered a eulogy for Senator Ted Kennedy Saturday Aug 29th, honoring one of his mentors not only as a political champion, but as a man of personal fortitude and compassion.

Speaking at a Catholic service in Boston, in the northeastern U.S. state of Massachusetts, Mr. Obama said Kennedy became the “greatest legislator of our time” by seeking compromise. He also praised his

“spirit of resilience” which allowed him to overcome pain and tragedy, and his much-publicized personal failings.

Kennedy was the patriarch of America’s most famous political family, and his funeral drew many members of the Washington elite.

Former presidents Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush attended, with more than 60 current and former U.S. Senators.

Kennedy’s casket is being flown to Washington, DC, to be driven by motorcade past the U.S. Capitol, before proceeding to Arlington National Cemetery. He is to be buried there near the graves of his assassinated brothers, President John F. Kennedy and Senator Robert Kennedy.

Edward “Ted” Kennedy died on Aug 25th at the age of 77 from brain cancer.

Serving for 47 years as a Democrat in the Senate, Kennedy was known as the “liberal lion”, taking positions that often angered his conservative counterparts. But lawmakers who worked with him have praised his ability to reach across party lines on important issues like civil rights, health care and education.

His funeral follows several days of memorials during which Kennedy’s fellow Democrats, along with Republicans united in paying him tribute. Former political foe and

personal friend, Republican Senator Orrin Hatch said he had battled Kennedy for 33 years, and “enjoyed every minute of it.

Vice President Joe Biden said Kennedy changed the way Americans look at those who are different from them, with greater tolerance for those differences.

Tributes also have come from other world leaders, highlighting Kennedy’s dedication to human rights and his work to end apartheid in South Africa.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown did not attend the funeral, but wrote in Boston Globe that Kennedy is being mourned as a “great internationalist” who inspired social progress in every country. [voa news]



# Celebrating Naag Panchami

Naga or Naag cult had been a world wide phenomenon. The words naga and serp in Sanskrit are closely related to English words such as snake and serpent. Serpents had been revered in Asia, Europe and prehistoric civilization of Mayan in America. We also find their references in Naveli corifinds of Turkey, Indus valley civilization of Mohenjadaro and Harrapa, Mesopotamian, is central Asia, Italy, China, Cambodia, Indonesia and Vedic civilization. In India, Naag is being revered since the Vedic period in the form of celebrating "Naag Panchami". Naag Panchami festival is held every year on the fifth day of the brighter half of the month of Shrawan or Bhadon month of Bikrami year which usually falls on August or September according to Christian year.

The total awe and veneration with which Indians hold snake on the day of "Naag Panchami" is the most eloquent expression to indicate unified devotion to the king of serpents - Sessa or Seshnag. Seshnag symbolizes eternity as Lord Vishnu-Preserver of the Brahamand (Universe) rests on its coils overseeing the dissolution of

one universe and creation of another. Other names of chief Naags that are worshipped are: Vasuki, Ananta, Padamnabha, Kambalam, Sankhpala, Driftrastra, Takshaka and Kali Naag. But among all these Naags, the image and character of Vasuki is supreme. Vasuki Naag is worshipped not only in India but also in abroad. In India, Vasuki Naags temples are present in Uttar Pradesh (Prayag-Allahabad), Gujarat (Thane and Lar), Himachal Pradesh (Kulu and Chamba) and Jammu and Kashmir (Verinag and Kupwara in Kashmir and Bhaderwah in Jammu) In these places a big fair is held on Naag Panchami. In Bhaderwah in devotion to Vasuki Naag a great fair known "Mela Patt" is celebrated every year at the compound of Khakal Mohalla on Naag Panchami.

Mythology: As there is incidence of snake bites during rainy season due to their frequent occurrence after leaving holes and entering in people's homes particularly in rural areas, so it is more out of fear than faith that villagers appease them on Naag Panchami in form of God snakes. Another myth pertains to Guru Gorkhnath. He once passed by Baltis Shirale village in Sangla town of Maharashtra and saw an

old woman praying for her daughter's marriage before Cobra's image made of clay. Guru Gorkhnath himself turned into a snake and appeared before the woman. The woman took this snake to her home and murtured it for a number of days. One fine morning a youngman visited woman's house and asked for the hand of her daughter. This happened on Naag Panchami day and predictably the serpent disappeared from the scene and since then Naag Panchami is celebrated by Hindus.

Hindus believe in the mortality of the snakes because of the sloughing of the skin. The Jains believe that the hooded serpent was the protector of Muni Parshwanath. To Buddhists the divinity systems from the myth of Cobra saving the life of Lord Buddha.

Celebration of Naag Panchami On Nag Panchami many people visit temples especially dedicated to snakes and worship them. Lord Shiva's temples are also favoured places for veneration of snakes are considered dear to Lord Shiva.

In many Indian houses, elderly women draw pictures of five headed cobras on wooden planks, recite hymns and mantras and pray them for their welfare.



In Bengal and parts of Assam and Orrisa snake worship is resorted in the form of Mansa worship where the blessings of the queen of serpents are invoked. Services of snake charmers are sought to make the Goddess entertained with melodious tunes meant for the occasion.

In south India, people draw images of snakes using cow dung on either side of the entrance to the house to welcome the snake God. Some go to worship the snake which is believed to be hiding in the holes of ant hills-locally known Bawa Surgals which is very common in Jammu region also. Most of the Jammuites celebrate Naag Panchami with great fervour and gaiety. Elderly women or men draw pictures of snakes on floors

or on walls of the rooms including kitchens. Such pictures are made from the wet ground rice flour. The so made snakes are then offered with "churi" mixture of sweet khir and salty khir (Maheri), purah, kewar etc. Mantras are recited and prayers are made by remembering deities known as Kulh devatas. After offering churi to the so drawn snakes some of its portion is added to the crows by saying them "koh koh". Some of the families immediately rub the so drawn snakes pictures on the floors after offering churi and worshipping. However, snakes made on the walls of rooms/kitchens upto the next years Naag Panchami, when these are rubbed and redrawn.

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Happy Independence Day - INDIA

# East - West and half born Sinhala

## “Jesu daruwa”

by Kusal Perera

It was a lazy evening ebbing into a wet Saturday, Sep 5th night, after a Friday poya holiday. This was a Sri Lankan evening, down what was better known as “Flower Road” during a “long weekend”. The acoustically elegant but not so modern hall of the Colombo Ladies College, was quietly but hurriedly accommodating the culturally affluent in urban Colombo. This year the crowd was somewhat different though, to that in previous years.

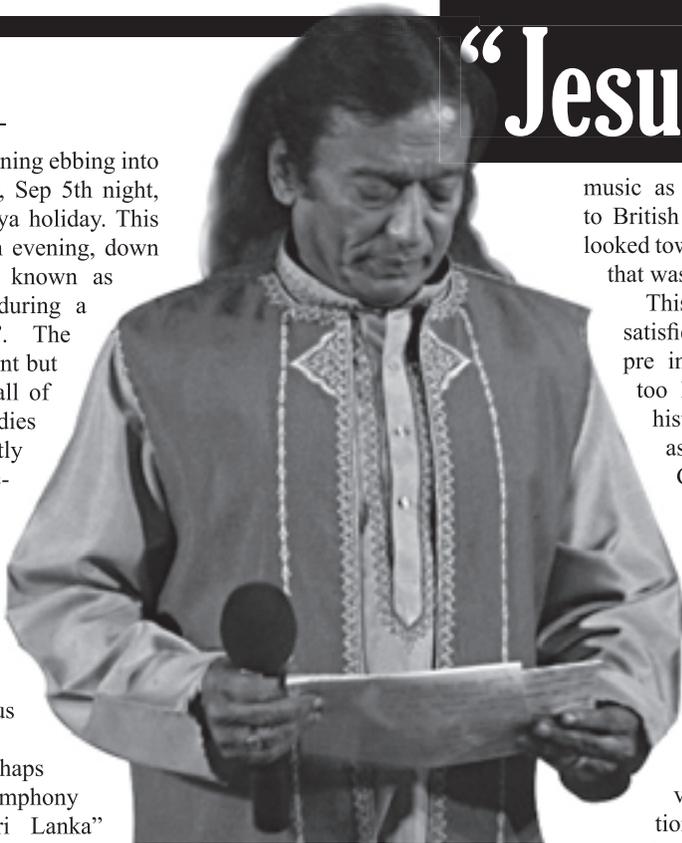
The reason perhaps was that the “Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka” (SOSL) in its 52nd Season was to provide music to two versatile and respected musical personalities of the exclusively Sinhala world. That for the first time too, such an “experimental” blending of Sinhala songs were to be made with chamber music of a large symphony orchestra that has for decades been proud to play classical music of the best celebrity composers in the West.

As Professor Ajith Abeysekera who worked out the chemistry of this new blend of Western orchestral music and the not so classical, popular Sinhala song told a few days before the event, they (SOSL) were “.....not really trying to do fusion. That is not the idea. We haven’t done anything to make them sound Western, but we make use of orchestral colour with entirely western instruments. It’s very interesting.”

True to his words, there were no improvisations to melodies and no change of style and pitch in signing. The two artistes, Visharadha Nanda Malini and Sangeethvedi Victor Ratnayake simply stood in front of two mikes and sang 06 of their best songs each, as they had been singing for the last 30 or 40 years. They did well. They sang their best. Yet there was something amiss. Was it the “orchestral colour” that Prof Abeysekera said they were adding that went missing?

The “orchestral colour” the Symphony orchestra had when they played 02 Western Classical operas, in contrast to their musical backing of the 02 singers, was what missed out in the show. There seemed some restraint in musicians playing their musical score for what was arranged for the songs. The musical mood was “cautious” in their accompaniment of the two singers.

This feeling of alienation of a sort was clearly audible, in all songs sung, except in the one that had a Church choir influence. Music opened up in its symphonical style for the song “Jesu swamy daruwane...” when Nanda sang her heart out on that. This is one song that broke off from the orthodoxy of the now established Sinhala music form reaching out to a choir style melody. That then



Victor Ratnayake

made a rare link between the singer and the orchestral players. With all other songs sung that Saturday night, obviously they felt a distance to the style, melody and the quality of voice of these 02 very “Sinhala” singers.

That had to be expected, although most in the audience seemed not to. Yet it was an experience to feel the difference. The Western classical music as we hear and enjoy them now, has a long history of many centuries, evolving from the time of the Greek empire. Shut to public performances during the Roman era, it sustained the group or “large gathering” character of playing many instruments at churches, funerals and at places of religious worth. This form of “concert” music then evolved into philharmonic or symphony music through the European “Renaissance” to the modern world.

Through its evolution, it has gained much with written music for large orchestras with different instrument families. Growing in a liturgical social context that had the advantage of “printing” much before other societies outside Europe, Western classical music flourished in a disciplined design as decided by composers.

Writing music before it is played out, composers searched for very many variations that saw intricately complex relationships between its emotional content and the intellectual means by which it is achieved. This complexity in emotions and intellect is the forte in Western classical music where “soprano” voices have gained a prestigious presence as capable of delivering both emotion and intellect.

The ability to stand up in singing for such musical composing, was what went missing with the two singers who are schooled in a completely different musical tradition. Schooling in the borrowed North Indian “Hindustani” (Utthara Bharatheeya) music here in Sri Lanka is not even a century old. Then “Ceylon” looked towards North Indian classical

music as one that was opposed to British rule. The Sinhala elite looked towards a musical tradition that was anti British in colour.

This Hindustani music that satisfied the politics of the pre independence Ceylonese too has a long and strong history of growth, starting as devotional appeals to God Krishna. It had its influence from early Persian folk music and later from the Arabian traditions with the Moghul empire. The long path of evolution of Hindustani music is esoteric and is based on “ragas”, each said to be devoted to a different emotional state.

So is the other South Indian tradition of Carnatic music. That too is very religious from its origin and has very much less influence

life in them. A society that lives with such endemic traditions honing its skills with every generation for centuries and not decades, develops an intellectual component that in art forms takes on high aesthetic values. This is common in both Western classical music and in Indian “raghadhari” music in two different planes of intellectual entertainment.

Yet the Sinhala society in its entire history, greatly influenced by Theravada Buddhism had no such cultural base.

The Sinhala culture lacked any music tradition and its folk forms were extremely mediocre and primitive to even assimilate a strong music tradition. There was also no “palace culture” of Sinhala music and dance that could have at least provided a niche for such acceptance and nurturing of Hindustani music. Therefore in Sri Lanka, the modern day Sinhala music begins as purely an intervention from the outside world from the 16 century when with the

Portuguese and the Dutch, their “Baila and Kaf-fringa” entered into coastal social layers and much later in early 20 century the Hindustani music was brought in that then turned into an academic exercise in its later years.

The first singers and musicians therefore came from backgrounds that were not Sinhala and when they were Sinhala, they were from a church training. The first few who ventured out to secure learning and training in Hindustani music too were from such church backgrounds. That was in late 1940’s and they became pioneers who experimented with a new Sinhala musical tradition. That was more in the realm of lyrics as aptly seen in the difference between Saranagupta Amarasinghe

– Deva Suriyasena type of songs and Ananda Samarakoon - Sunil Shanta variant. It was their simple Sinhala lyrics that compelled them to try out melodies to carry their lyrics from early 1940’s into the 50’s.



Nanda Malini

from Persian and Arabic traditions. Yet these two neighbouring music traditions that Sinhala song and music derives their theoretical base, grew into perfection through rituals and intellectual discourse. They therefore needed extremely devoted and committed learning and training.

Music and art become living cultural traditions through long evolutionary exercises in society and then become part of social

with a Dravidian flavour. What they lacked was not only a strong culture, but also a strong entertainment market that could sustain them. An entertainment industry that was absent in the “welfare State” economy the early Ceylon carried after independence. Except for the old “Radio Ceylon” they only had a cheap fledgling cinema that was not very much open for experimental songs and music. The possibility of training and developing professional Sinhala musicians as classical exponents of that art form, had very little or no scope within post independent Sri Lanka.

This therefore diluted early efforts in establishing “Shanthi-nikethan” type musical schools. Horana “Shripali” that was graced by Rabindranath Tagore at its birth, gradually turned into an ordinary school in the area. The State sponsored “Haywood” as an aesthetic training institute that can boast of popular Sinhala artistes like Victor Ratnayake, Sanath Nandasiri, Amara Ranatunge, late Gunadasa Kapuge to name a few, was not in any way a substitute for classical music teaching of high order. It could mostly turn out Music Teachers for primary and secondary government schools of the day. Very creative classical exponents of the art in the calibre of Pundit Ravi Shankar, Ustad Vilayat Khan, Ustad Ali Akbar, Hari Prasad Chaurasia, wasn’t therefore Sri Lanka’s pride and fortune.

This has not changed to the better, even after the economy was opened up 03 decades ago. In modern societies that do not promote democracy and thus can not afford a healthy “night life”, the possibility of establishing strong cultures of performing art including music within an entertainment market, is one that does not happen. The absence of “night life” not only deprives an entertainment market, it deprives the society of healthy discourse too.

An indispensable necessity in developing critical intellectual interventions that in turn catalyse intellectual growth and development of art and culture. Sinhala music is one that has therefore not attained the classical perfection of its borrowed musical traditions even after many decades of continued indulgence. This is reason why Sinhala music has not been able to produce Ravi Shankars and Ali Rakkhas who could perform with awe as oriental musical giants alongside Western musicians.

This perhaps was what lacked at the Ladies’ College auditorium that night. While a standing ovation accepted the effort of the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka, a question that remained glum and dumb was whether a Western classical symphony that had grown with complex relationships between emotional content and intellectual aesthetics could effectively be the musical facilitator for yet to be born Sinhala classics that had stopped with light pop songs. Again the answer would only be theoretical and not practical in a society that has little wherewithal to meet such challenge.



Major building project will create jobs and improve travel and trade across the Canada-U.S. border

QUEENSTON, ONTARIO - Construction has begun on the rehabilitation of the Canadian Plaza at the Queenston-Lewiston Bridge. When completed the new Plaza will reduce border congestion and improve customs capacity at the vital Canada-U.S. border.

"The Queenston-Lewiston border crossing has played an important role throughout Canada's history. Through this investment, it will be better positioned to play an equally important role in our country's future," said Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who toured the construction site today. "This project means more jobs for local workers today. It will also ensure that Queenston will build on its position as a vital access point for continental trade."

The construction currently underway is part of the second phase of improvements to the Canadian Plaza. It will include the construction of additional passenger and bus primary inspection lanes; commercial vehicle warehouse inspection facilities; passenger vehicle and bus inspection facilities; an animal inspection

## CANADA'S ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

### PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER VISITS CONSTRUCTION SITE OF QUEENSTON- LEWISTON BRIDGE PROJECT



facility; and a new central building for the Canada Border Services Agency and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Earlier in the day the Prime Minister joined Minister of Justice and Attorney General Rob Nicholson in visiting the construction site of the new Niagara Convention and Civic Centre. When completed the convention centre will further enhance the position of Niagara Falls as a major convention destination. It is expected that the facility will

attract approximately 500,000 visitors per year and create well-paid jobs in the Niagara Region.

"This new convention centre will help build on the established reputation of Niagara Falls as a major destination for the convention business, and it will create numerous spin-off benefits for the local economy," said the Prime Minister. "It is the kind of long-term investment that the people of the Niagara Region deserve to see."



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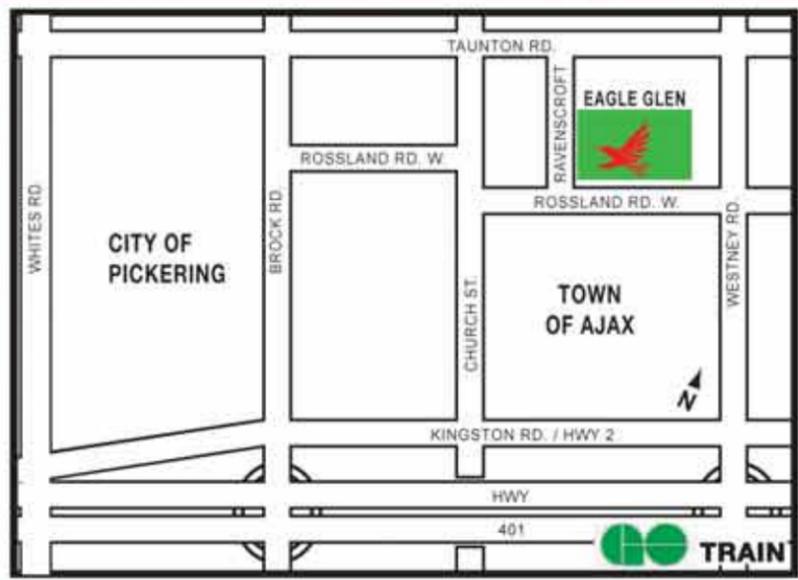
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## MONSOON FEATURE

John Boddy Homes has won the Diamond Award for 'Best Builder' for the twelfth year in a row in this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has now opened its newest phase in their Eagle Glen community in Ajax. Located just minutes east of Toronto, the Eagle Glen Community combines the closeness and convenience of city living with a suburban feel, and its prime location makes it a great place to call home. Classic two-storey homes are available, as well as side and back splits, bungalows, and future semi-detached and townhomes. Homes start at 1,701 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,858 square feet, some with triple car garages. John Boddy Homes offers traditional size lots with a minimum of 105 feet in depth and a limited selection of wide shallow lots and pond lots. With such a broad range of house sizes and styles Eagle Glen has the ideal

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For a limited time only John Boddy Homes is currently offering an incentive package including an upgrade master ensuite with separate shower and upgrade tub plus \$7,500 in free upgrades. They are also now offering purchasers one year of Rogers serv-

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

The Eagle Glen community offers many important neighbourhood amenities such as a brand new public elementary school opened this month, places of worship, fully equipped parks and easy access to both Ajax and Go-Transit Services. Toronto is easily accessible from nearby Highways 401 and 407. Located just north of a host of shopping and recreation centres, 'Eagle Glen' allows residents all the amenities of the urban lifestyle while providing the beauty and tranquility of the

neighbouring countryside.

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

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

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



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

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

ets, 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



Rendering of Model  
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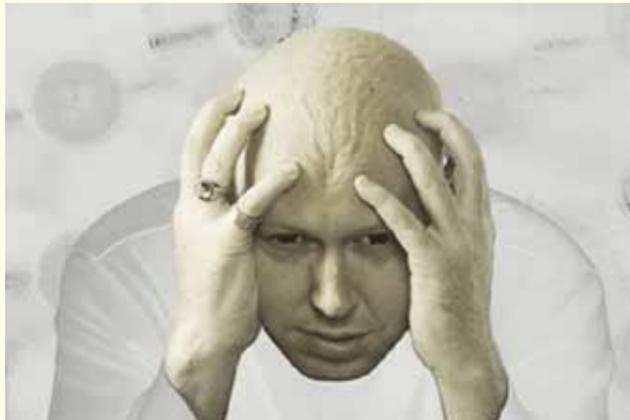
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WORDS OF PEACE

# A Deeper Ocean

"A catchy little phrase, 'Peace is possible,' has incredible significance," says Maharaji, an internationally renowned voice for peace and fulfillment. "To begin to have the hope that peace is possible is tremendous."

Maharaji has spent decades traveling the world reminding people of this simple but often overlooked truth. True peace, he says, is not a ceasefire or a moment of quiet in a busy, noisy world, but a feeling in the heart—"not just the beating heart, but a heart that inspires us to be fulfilled; a heart that tells us every day to be in peace." Speaking by invitation at gatherings of virtually every composition, from small groups of villagers in remote locations to vast convocations of politicians, professors, and ordinary people in major cities, he has reached millions with this message of personal peace.

Maharaji often describes his mission as an attempt to introduce people to themselves. "Maybe you have been introduced to a lot of your traits, like anger and fear," he says. "Let me introduce to you some of your very basic other traits: compassion, love, understanding; the desire for peace, the want to be fulfilled. These are important things, and if they are missing from our formula for a successful life, then we will not really be successful. We will reach benchmarks, and that's all."

To illustrate the need for searching for a deeper understanding of the self, Maharaji tells a simple fable.

"Two frogs met once," he says, "and they got to talking.

"The first frog said, 'Where are you from?'

"The other one said, 'I'm from the ocean, where are you from?'

"I'm from the well. Come on. Let's go and visit my house.'

"They got to talking some more, and the well frog asked, 'How big is your ocean?'

"The ocean frog didn't want to embarrass the frog from the well,

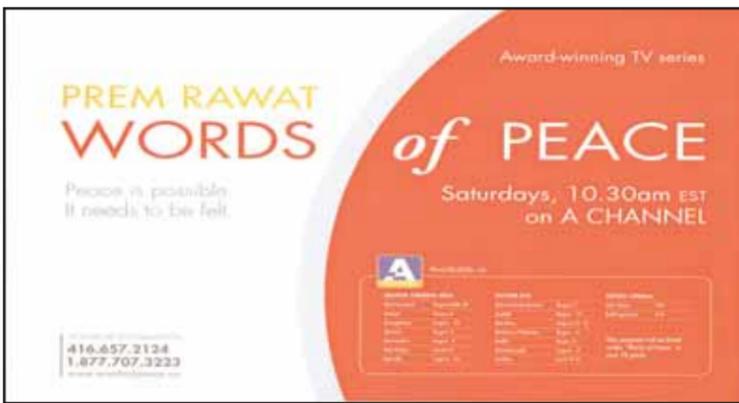


human beings.

"We have become masters of ignoring facts," he says. "We count our blessings by the certificates hung on the wall, and ignore the blessings that flow through us every minute, every second, every day.

"Where, logically, do you think that kind of ignoring will lead? We come alone, and we go alone. Of all the people you know, the most fascinating will always be you—if only you knew yourself, if only you could understand the possibility that you have been given, if you could only understand that the greatest gift you will ever have is this existence, this life."

Maharaji invites people to search within themselves for the



so he just said, 'It's pretty big.'

"So the frog from the well jumped around, as frogs do, and made a little circle. He said, 'Is it this big?'

"The other frog said, 'No, it's bigger.'

"The well frog made a little bit bigger circle and said, 'This big?'

"No, it's bigger.'

"The well frog kept going on for so long that finally the frog from the ocean said, 'Come, let me show you. Let me take you there.'

"When they got to the ocean, the frog from the well could see that there was no end to it in sight."

In the same way, says Maharaji, many people are so caught up in the self they present to the world that they don't realize the depth of their potential as

gift of peace he talks about, and offers his assistance in that quest.

"Peace is a gift that we have been given and we need to explore," he says. "This quest has always been there in your existence. Take the steps—this time, not only outside, but also inside—and feel the peace that is dancing in the beautiful halls of your heart.

"Learn to live. Learn the compassion of your heart. It begins with the simplest of understandings, with the simplest of steps, the simplest of acceptances—that you are alive."

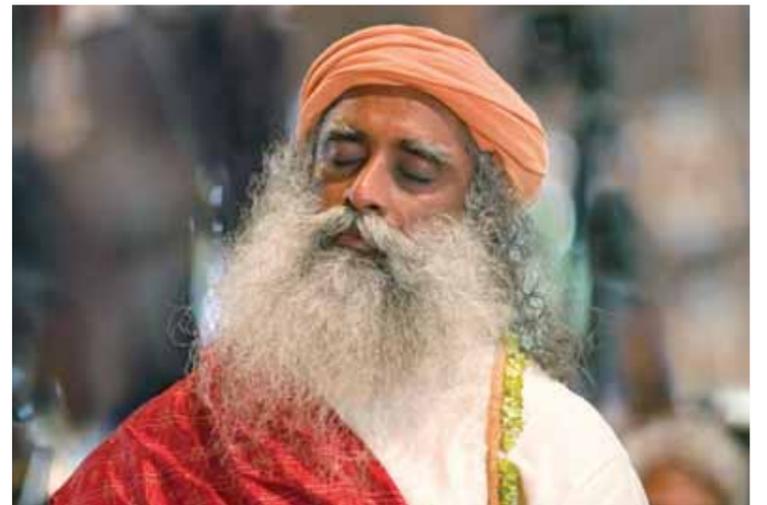
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is. That's all.

They're just trying to destroy one and get them to the other, is not about, you can't get anybody to reality. You're just trying to demolish things which are untrue. That's all. You can never get anybody to reality. If he's ready to have all untruths destroyed, yes, he arrives at it, that's all. So that's another aspect.

## The Unchanging aspect of you



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 416 300 3010 or email [Toronto@ishafoundation.org](mailto:Toronto@ishafoundation.org)

put a name on it, it becomes an entity. If you call it atman, soul, self... whatever you call it, the moment you put a name on it, it becomes an entity. That's where the misunderstanding and the struggle is with people. When somebody says soul, immediately I look at the soles of my feet and make fun of it, to make them understand that whatever they have thought about it is not it. It cannot be like that. Just joke about it and destroy their concept of what the soul is.

They say good souls. In the west there are these things, "Oh he's a good soul." There's no good soul, or bad soul. Soul is beyond all identification, all entity, all everything. There is no soul otherwise. That's why Gautama went about saying, you're Anathma. There is no athma. Then what is it? Ah, it's nothingness. He's just giving another name, just to deceive you from your misconceptions. Just to get you out of one, he's getting you into a new word, that's all. So tomorrow you go about saying I'm nothing, I'm nothing, I'm nothing - that becomes an entity. When that happens we use another word. See it's not that the word is trying to describe what it is; the word is trying to destroy your misconceptions about what it

In yoga we look at everything as body. Physical body, physiology as body, mind as body, energy or pranic system as body, and the etheric substance is also seen as body. Everything is seen as body. And even the soul as body. This is a very wise way to look at it. So when you say Anandamayakosha or the Bliss body, you're referring to the ultimate. But even that is seen as a body, because that's how it is right now. That's the only way you can grasp it, you don't talk about anything there at a distance, you talk about how to transcend one limitation and go to the next one. When you transcend all limitations what happens- happens, why should you think about it now? Because whatever you think, you think only from your limitations. Nobody can think of anything which is not in the present dimensions of experience. Nobody. In the whole existence nobody can think of any damn thing which is not in the present dimensions of their experience.

So physical body, mental body, pranic body, they're subtler and subtler aspects. If you take your body as a whole model of creation, it's like a paint smear. Starting with a very gross substance, becoming subtle, subtle, subtle, finally becoming Nothing.

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## LETTERS & OPINIONS

By: jja

### A. Presidential Despotism

Jayewardene Constitution gave executive powers to the president which resulted in the country being ruled mainly in the interests of the majority Sinhalese. When Sri Lanka came under the Western Rule it was divided into three independent kingdoms namely the Kingdom of Kotte, The Kingdom of Kandy and the Kingdom of Jaffna. It was the westerners who put an end to the sovereignty of the Tamils by unifying Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) and brought it into one rule. When the country got its independence in 1948, it was hoped that 'a polyethnic and multi-religious Sri Lanka was well set to create a liberal, progressive and stable government'. But the changes to the constitution and the trend towards presidential despotism led to anarchy and lawlessness. The country could have been governed more tactfully and altruistically.

The Island has the lowest press freedom among the democratic states in the entire world. 'Reporters Without Borders' claimed that journalist endures murder, attacks, abductions, intimidations and harassment. The decline of democracy in Sri Lanka started with President Jayewardene's regime and reached its boiling point under the incumbent. It was Jayewardene with his two-thirds majority who could have solved the ethnic problem but he was intransigent and the country continued to bleed.

# The Shift towards Presidential Despotism and the Challenges to Tamil Rights in Sri Lanka

### B. Fresh Threats to Tamils' Rights

Tamils who agitated for their rights peacefully at the start of the independence era had to take up to more radical methods in order to match the trend in the South. All peaceful attempts to secure political rights for the Tamils were suppressed in the 1950's which gave way to the rise of the LTTE taking the role as violent defenders of Tamil Rights. It was the GGP-SJVC combination that might have secured a political solution to the problem as they had the appropriate leadership qualities and the intelligence.

Unfortunately they clashed and the Tamils have to pursue harder road which has so far cost innumerable lives and loss of property. Attempts at constitutional changes to give devolution to North and East provinces where Tamils were the dominant community failed. Both the UNP and the SLFP did not make any serious effort to cure 'the cancer that ate into the body politic of the nation.' (As the LSSP leader Colvin R De Silva put it.) The incidents that followed- the burning of the Jaffna Public Library, University admissions on the racial quota basis, the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1779 led to the rise of the violent activities of the Liberation Tigers who believed that might is right. The Sinhalese Buddhist leaders took the opportunity fan the flames of communalism.

The Sri Lankan government gave more attention to the terrorist problem and not the ethnic issue. Jeyawardene, Premadasa and Chandrika made half-hearted attempts and had talks with the

LTTE but the peace talks failed. The ethnic conflict continued to last long due to the inability of the Sri Lankan government to grant limited autonomy for the Tamils and the LTTE's reluctance to settle for a political solution.

### C. Sinhala Buddhist Ethnocentrism

The problems became worse under Mahinda Rajapakse who used his presidential powers to crush the LTTE. The LTTE was unable to handle a formal war with the Sri Lankan army as they were ably supported by other Asian powers. Though defeated the LTTE might at a later time revert to guerrilla war to destabilise Sri Lanka. The Sinhala Buddhist ethnocentrism is now consolidated under a vigorous president ably backed by two of his brothers (the trimurative of Mahinda, Basil and Gothabhaya). They are the self-acclaimed proponents of the Sinhala Buddhist nationalist ideology with the support of Jathika Hela Urumaya and Jathika Vimukthi Peramuna.

### D. The Tamils in Disarray

On the other hand the Tamils are not united. Some of the parties supporting the SLFP and others opposed to them. They are unable to come together to win the rights of the Tamils. The Rajapaksas are now glorifying the fact that they have defeated terrorism and the Tamils. The forces of anti democracy and anti liberalism have gained grounds. They justify their position by quoting the methods and techniques of the LTTE.

The presidential despotism is being watered by rampant nepotism, favouritism, corruption and utter disregard for human rights.



The refugee camps in Vavuniya are not being managed democratically. The humanitarian aids from donors from all over the world is not allowed to reach those in urgent need.

### E. The Dire Need for Sanity

The ethnic issue is now more serious than ever before. Sri Lanka should return to sanity. The people affected by the recent holocaust should be rehabilitated. And every effort should be made save and resuscitate the masses affected by the war. There is tremendous amount of aid flowing into the country which could be utilised to heal the ill-effects of the war.

The ethnic issue should be solved irrespective of political differences. There have been umpteen suggestions made towards the same end over the years. Even recently the academicians and retired civil servants in Sri Lanka had put forward a suggestion that an entirely new set of ideas should be planned out for the successful solution to the ethnic impasse. All parties should come together to solve the ethnic problem that had devastated the country for more than three decades. Therein lies the future of Sri Lanka which was once described as the 'Pearl of the Indian Ocean.'

## Religious right vs. Workplace health and safety

By: Ellakiya Sivapalan,  
BA (Hons.) Political Science

The hearing for the human rights case of Loomba vs. The Home Depot continued at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario at 655 Bay Street late last month. This case has been under much media scrutiny since the hearing began in January of this year - mainly because it touches on the sensitive issues of religious rights and accommodation. Mr. Deepinder Loomba, the complainant in this case, argues he was discriminated by his employer, three years ago, on the basis of religion. Mr. Loomba, a 50 year old Sikh man, was working as a security guard at the Home Depot Milton store on December 6, 2005, when he alleges, Mr. Brian Busch, the Assistant Store Manager, asked him to replace his turban with a hard hat. Mr. Loomba is seeking \$40,000 in damages.

The hearing in August was the last of the first stage of this proceeding. Hearing began in January, continued in May and

final arguments were heard on August 24 and 25. While it took three years for the Tribunal to hear this case, Mr. Loomba and his lawyer Raj Anand are hopeful of the outcome. They strongly feel this case has merit. At the August hearing, Mr. Busch took the stand to give his testimony of the events that took place three years ago. On December 6, 2005, Mr. Loomba was stationed as a guard at the security front desk of the Milton store, which was under construction at that time. As the Assistant Store Manager, it was Mr. Busch's responsibility to ensure all individuals and employees entering the construction site wore a hard hat and safety shoes. Mr. Busch approached Mr. Loomba on that day and asked him to put on a hard hat. Mr. Loomba informed him of his turban. Mr. Busch then asked him if he could wear an alternative head dress that would be suitable under a hard hat. Mr. Loomba advised him that he was unable to do that and asked to wear the hard hat over his turban but Mr. Busch refused

saying it would fall off.

Earlier in his testimony, Mr. Loomba argued that he was humiliated and ridiculed by the manager and other workers for refusing to replace his turban with the hard hat. Mr. Loomba also alleged the manager threatened his employment if he did not wear the protective gear and referred to his turban as "that piece of cloth", which Mr. Busch strongly denies. He told the Tribunal that his hair has been unshorn since birth and that the only time he removes his turban is when he sleeps or bathes. As a Sikh, Mr. Loomba is not supposed to cut or expose his hair in public. In the Sikh religion, hair is considered sacred and a gift from God.

What makes this case intriguing and complicated is the employer's duty to accommodate religious rights of the employees and at the same time comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act. It is a clash of the two Acts - the Ontario Human Rights Code and the OHS Act. It is an issue of whether rights trump law or vice versa.

Was Home Depot able to accommodate Mr. Loomba in any way if he was unable to wear a hard hat at that particular site?

Mr. Loomba argued earlier that he was neither told by Home Depot nor Reilly Security Services that he would be required to wear a hard hat upon being hired. Mr. Busch argues that there was nothing else he or Home Depot could do to accommodate Mr. Loomba. It was not possible to have him relocated to a site outside the hard hat area where his security duties could have been performed. He claims the Milton store was entirely a construction site. Mr. Loomba was a direct employee of Reilly Security Services Agency who was stationed at the Milton store as a security guard. Mr. Busch claims it was Reilly's responsibility to move Mr. Loomba to another site but neither Mr. Loomba nor Reilly Security Services gave any suggestions on how to resolve the situation. The question that remains to be answered before the Tribunal is how far Home Depot could go to accommodate Mr. Loomba if he is not a direct employee? The counsel for the Ontario Human Rights Commission, Mr. Anthony Griffin, agrees the respondent will experience undue hardship if it is in breach of the OHS Act but argues that Home Depot can accommo-

date Mr. Loomba in a way that will not lead to the breach of the Act. The employer has the duty to accommodate when there is an issue of discrimination. In this case, it is Home Depot that is accused of discrimination against Mr. Loomba and not Reilly Security Services.

This is not the first of the headcover disputes in Canadian legal history. In the early 1990s, Avtar Singh Dhillon was refused a motorcycle license for unwilling to remove his turban for the helmet. He filed a discrimination case in British Columbia. In 1991, Baltej Singh Dhillon was the first RCMP officer allowed to wear a turban and keep his beard after a long battle with the federal government. In 2001, Gurcharan Dran refused to wear a helmet at a ride in Canada's Paramount Wonderland. He brought a human rights case against Wonderland and the two parties settled.

The first stage of Mr. Loomba's hearing was completed in August. The second stage will likely begin soon with the intervention of the Ontario Ministry of Labour. The MOL will take intervenor status to discuss the interaction between the Code and the OHS Act.

# Rice Boy: A beautiful memory play with local roots that points the Stratford festival towards its future



By Robert Reid,  
Record staff

STRATFORD - Playwright Sunil Kuruvilla didn't go to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival when he was growing up in Waterloo.

No matter.

He made his festival debut on his own terms-with an original play.

Rice Boy, a play that bridges Waterloo Region and India, opened Saturday at the Studio Theatre.

Moreover, Kuruvilla made his first Stratford appearance with director Guillermo Verdecchia, who attended Waterloo's Bluevale Collegiate Institute the same time as Kuruvilla.

In contrast to the playwright, the director attended festival productions at every opportunity while growing up in Kitchener and Waterloo.

Irrespective of their history with the festival, both artists are making history at North America's leading classical repertory theatre company.

Rice Boy is the first contemporary play about the immigrant experience written from the inside, as it were, ever to be

staged at Stratford.

Moreover, all but two of nine cast members of predominately East Indian ancestry are making their Stratford debut.

The play takes place in 1975 when 12-year-old Tommy (Araya Mengesha) accompanies his father (Raoul Bhaneja) back to India.

They are visiting his paternal grandfather (Sam Moses), his father's brother (Sanjay Talwar), auntie (Deena Aziz) and cousin Tina (Anita Majumdar), a 16-year-old paraplegic about to wed a man she has never met.

Tommy's father, who has had a hard time adjusting to life in Canada, is still grieving the death of his wife who drowned a decade previously.

For Tommy, Waterloo Region is home, so he is having a hard time adjusting to life in India.

Although most of the play takes place in India, it brims with local references from Harmony Lunch and Rockway Fish & Chips to St. Jacobs Market and the Waterloo Siskins hockey team.

Rice Boy is a beautiful memory play.

But Verdecchia, who, like

Kuruvilla, grew up in an immigrant family, ensures it retains a hard, though sympathetic, edge. He has no interest in portraying intercultural realities through rose-coloured glasses.

Rice Boy would be a good play were it primarily about the clash of cultures-East and West, traditional and modern.

However, it transcends cultural politics by exploring the universal experience of the sadness and regret that accompanies separation and loss.

What Rice Boy is really about is love-the joy of finding it, the comfort of possessing it and, most poignantly, the pain of losing it.

The play is riddled with the

multigenerational loss of loved ones through the vagaries and misfortune of death, departure and disappearance.

While none of the grieving survivors find anything approaching redemption or salvation, they learn the hard lesson of how to continue living-and in that lies hope.

The production features fine ensemble work that polishes the play's patina of sorrow with rich humour.

Aziz and Talwar are reprising roles they created when an earlier version of Rice Boy premiered at Toronto's CanStage Berkeley Street Theatre in 2003.

The cast is rounded out with Asha Vijayasingham as the ser-

vant girl, Anand Rajaram as the fish seller and Jonathan Purdon as Mr. Harris the Canadian neighbour.

Jessica Poirier-Chang's minimalist set is utilitarian rather than poetic, but it gives the audience room to exercise their visual imaginations, as when Tommy climbs a couple of stepladders signifying trees.

More than any other play being presented this season, Rice Boy points the festival in the direction of its future, while acknowledging its past in the works of William Shakespeare.

Rice Boy continues through Oct. 3 at the Studio Theatre. Tickets are available at 1-800-567-1600 or online at [www.stratfordfestival.ca](http://www.stratfordfestival.ca)

[rreid@therecord.com](mailto:rreid@therecord.com)



Waterloo Region's Tamil Performing Arts festival

## Tamil Cultural Nite 09

தமிழ்

மாலைப் பொழுது

Saturday, October 17th  
6.00pm

Humanities Theater  
University of Waterloo

Dance - Music - Drama

**Admission Free**



TAMIL CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF WATERLOO REGION

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"Break, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could  
utter  
The thoughts that arise in me".



**Shanthakumari Vignarajah**  
Feb 18th 1954-July 28th 2009

It is with a deep feeling of sadness that I write about my classmate and friend Shanthi who passed away peacefully on July 28th at her residence in Nallur, Jaffna.

Shanthakumari Vignarajah nee Rajadurai, known as Shanthi to her relatives and friends, and I were GCE-Advanced level students at Jaffna College (JC), Vaddukkoddai from 1970-73. Our friendship continued after JC days and her marriage to Vignarajah who also became a good friend of mine.

She was senior lecturer in English at the University of Jaffna. Her Husband is the High Court Judge in Jaffna.

Shanthi was one of the few persons on this earth who understood me well. She was a friend with whom one could talk freely about any issue and receive a sympathetic hearing and at times help and non-judgemental advice.

It is with a sense of loss and sorrow that I pen this a month after her demise. Several memories were revived these days when thinking about her and I want to share them here as a personal memoir cum tribute to this wonderful person and friend.

#### Jaffna College

I remember vividly our first meeting some thirty-nine years ago. It was not very pleasant. JC is famous for its ragging and as a fresher at Howland Hostel I had undergone quite a lot of it on my first evening/night as a boarder. Now it was my first day at school and it was the turn of the day-scholars to engage in ragging.

At one point Shanthi came up to me and tried to converse. It was her innate friendliness reaching out to this "new" student. I was however suspicious and thought she too was plotting to

# My friend Shanthi

## A Personal tribute - By D.B.S. Jeyaraj

rag me. So I was taciturn and simply rebuffed her. Shanthi was annoyed and turned away. I learnt later that she described me as "proud and arrogant" to others.

But as the days progressed we became good friends. Life in a co-educational institution like Jaffna College was a fresh, interesting experience for me. The friendships that I formed at JC have proved durable and enduring. Of the girls at JC, Shanthi was the one I was closest to.

Both of us had turned our backs on a "science" education that was the craze in Jaffna and opted for the Arts. We offered the same subjects at the AL-Tamil, Logic, Government and English.



Jaffna College-Pic: jaeproject

#### English classes

JC at that time was divided as secondary and collegiate. We were in the secondary section but our principal Rajan Kadirgamar had made special arrangements for us to follow English classes at the Collegiate.

So Shanthi, Soori (now a lawyer in Britain) and I went over each day to the undergraduate or collegiate section for English. Our teachers were the Rev. Allan Gilberg an American missionary and the legendary JH Ariyaratnam who was also the Registrar at that time.

The pride of Jaffna College then was its Library one of the best of its kind in South Asia. Only undergraduate or Collegiate students could use this. Secondary school students were not allowed to use this Library and had to avail of a much smaller one.

Since we were following English classes at the undergraduates section we were also granted the privilege of using the big library.

Shanthi felt that we should utilise that Library only for studies related to English and not for the other three subjects as she felt it was not fair by our fellow classmates at the secondary section who were denied such access.

I agreed and so we did not use the better equipped undergraduates Library for the other subjects.

As we both studied the same subjects we had the same free periods too. Apart from this we

were both Christians and members of the choir, SCM and Student YMCA. Both of us engaged in Tamil and English oratory and essay competitions. We represented the College at Valigamam west zonal and Jaffna district competitions.

#### Romance

In fact the first time I saw Vignarajah was when he turned up at Jaffna Hindu College for an all-Jaffna district awards ceremony where Shanthi and I were prize-winners. Vignarajah who had studied at the JC undergraduates section was now a Law student.

His romance with Shanthi had begun at JC. Though I knew about him, this was the first time I saw Vignarajah. Needless to say Shanthi was mercilessly teased the next day.

The Arts classes were in a block opposite the laboratory and could be reached via a narrow staircase. Neither the Principal nor vice-principal ever came up there on sudden "inspection".

So we had a free run there chatting, arguing, teasing and even singing. Our class master then was Subramaniam Jebanesan who later became Jaffna College principal and the CSI Bishop of Jaffna.

I remember Shanthi's favourite Tamil film song those days was "Thennankeetru Oonjalliley" sung by PB Sreenivas and Janaki in the film "Paathai Theeriyuthu Paar". It was written by Jayakanthan and music composed by MP Sreenivasan.

Her favourite English song then was "oh wouldn't it be lovely" the Marni Nixon-Audrey Hepburn-ensemble song in "My Fair Lady". I can still hear Shanthi singing the lines "All I want is a room somewhere" and "Lots of chocolates for me to eat".

She could also play the guitar. Shanthi had a Hawaiian guitar and used to strum quite well. She used to go to Manipay for extra classes. It was amusing to see her cycle all the way to Manipay lugging the guitar along.

#### Popular

The cyclist Shanthi was a familiar sight in the JC environs. She would smile at those she knew while cycling and even greet juniors with a "how are you"?

Shanthi was like a sister to many younger girls at JC and immensely popular with them. I have been pleasantly surprised on many occasions when old girls of JC would come up and tell me "You were in Shanthi Acca's class".

Other than being classmates Shanthi and I were also members of the same "red" house-Hastings. At that time Abraham or

"green" house used to romp home as champions in the Track and Field Competitions. But in 1972 Hastings House was the champion.

Both of us were in the Athletic squad and I recall the winners trooping down triumphantly to Shanthi's house on College lane, Vaddukkoddai for a party. Later, to celebrate our victory, we went on a picnic to Valalai.

Shanthi's father JP Rajadurai was a well-known figure at Vaddukkoddai. He was a retired postmaster and used to ask us questions and go off without waiting for our answers. Her mother, a smiling, friendly lady was graciously hospitable to us hostellers when we dropped in at their house occasionally.

Shanthi was the youngest in her family. The eldest was her brother Walter who was working at Browns in Colombo when I was at JC. He had later gone to the middle-east. After returning Walter worked in Kilinochchi for CARITAS. But he suffered a heart attack and passed away last September.

Shanthi's sisters were Thamarakumari who was a home science teacher at JC then. Arasakumari the other sister was a student at JC. She was one class higher to us. They are now in Britain and Denmark respectively. Shanthi was not only the pet but also the pride of her family.

#### The young idea

The student unions or associations at JC had names such as Academy, Lyceum, Brotherhood and Forum. Academy was for the AL students. Shanthi and I were on opposite sides when debates were held in the academy. Both of us competed to be student speaker at the annual academy dinner. I won by a solitary vote.

But Shanthi was magnanimous on another matter. JC has a college journal that was published each term from 1936. The Tamil version was called "Ila Gnayiru" and the English one "The Young Idea". Being effectively bi-lingual both of us were on the editorial boards of both.

Shanthi was senior to me on the editorial board of "The Young Idea". At one point she was entitled to be the editor on account of her seniority. Yet she was willing to be a joint editor with me. So both of us were co-editors in 1972 of the journal. This was my first taste of being "editor" thanks to Shanthi.

Our first "employment" was also a joint venture at JC. We were asked to teach English to some of the junior students by the principal. We were paid for this and it was the first time we

ever got financial remuneration for something we did. I remember the joint treat we gave our friends at the tuck shop after getting our first "salary".

An inevitable feature in a co-educational school like JC was the coupling of boys and girls. A boy and a girl would be paired off for some, any or no reason at all. They would be teased and heckled and "honourably mentioned" when Baila songs like "tarare tara poduda" are sung.

Given the fact that Shanthi and I had many things in common it was but natural for both of us to be "linked" by others. This was a source of private amusement to us. Shanthi's romance with Vignarajah had commenced in 1968 in her early teens. Despite being at the receiving end of many jokes, the love of her life was Vicks.

Shanthi's full name was Geetha Geraldine Shanthakumary. She was born on February 18th 1954. I too was born in the same year but a few months later. Vignarajah was elder to us but both he and I have the same birthday, May 21st.

Both Shanthi and I gained admission in 1973 to the University at Kelaniya for a BA degree in humanities. But I did not enter university and instead chose to go "off the beaten track". Shanthi was deeply disappointed at my decision but accepted it. As I mentioned earlier she was one of the very few who understood me well.

My habit of not being in touch for a while and then suddenly turning up used to irritate her. "You can't walk in and out of people's lives like this" she would reprimand me. But she learnt to tolerate it and accepted me as a friend with all my faults. That was Shanthi.

#### Bread and wine

In 1978 when the Italian author Ignazio Silone died, Shanthi presented me a copy of his famous book "Bread and Wine". In that she had underlined certain sentences and paragraphs pertaining to the protagonist Pietro Spina and his teacher Don Benedetto. Shanthi said she recognized Spina in me. I don't think I deserved such a compliment but it was certainly flattering to hear her opinion.

She followed my career closely. She was not happy about my leaving the Tamil daily "Virakesari" and joining the English newspaper "The Island". She felt I would not be given enough freedom to write there. But she changed her mind after a while and became a fan of my weekly column "Behind the Cadjan curtain" in the "Sunday Island".

She remembered the salient points in each article and would reel them off from memory. It was not always praise and at times there would be constructive criticism that I valued highly.

There was one thing that Shanthi "hid" from me. This was her concern and anxiety for my personal safety. While she never expressed anything of that sort to me openly, I learnt after her demise that she had been regularly praying for me for many, many years. Characteristically she never ever told me this.

I was talking to her sister Arasakumari on the phone when she revealed that Shanthi had been constantly praying for my safety. Shanthi had said that while my articles were interesting and informative I was also endangering myself by writing them. I was touched immensely when Arasakumari told me that Shanthi had asked her sister to continue praying for me after she was gone.

I embarked on a journalistic career while Shanthi was reading for her degree. When working for the "Virakesari" I once compiled a feature interviewing young, educated women. Since everyone was saying the "usual, restrained" stuff I thought of interviewing Shanthi as I knew she would be boldly outspoken.

True to form Shanthakumari Rajadurai came out with some new, radical thoughts. She advocated a legally enforceable domestic code for households so that men could not exploit or control women. Shanthi's views evoked a loud outcry. Many critical letters were sent to the paper.

Though Shanthi had strong views on the rights and emancipation of women she was not an ardent feminist. She was quite independent and chartered her own course but did not articulate her views stridently. In a sense she belonged to the "dual" tradition of a working woman cum wife-mother.

Notwithstanding her radical outlook, the varsity lecturer Shanthi was the typical housewife at home cherishing and looking after husband and children. She was a loving mother and devoted wife. The woman who once advocated a domestic code pampered her husband at home. It was a labour of love.

**Jaffna University**

After passing out Shanthi was for a brief period an instructor at Kelaniya. She then went to the Jaffna university English department and went on to become senior lecturer. At one stage she became acting head of the English department.

Meanwhile Vignarajah had taken his oaths as an attorney at law and begun practising in Jaffna. The lengthy love affair was to reach a happy conclusion. They married despite some opposition over an inter-religious union.

Their family backgrounds were vastly different. She was a Christian while Vignaraja was

from an orthodox Hindu family that retained hereditary trusteeship over a Moolai temple. Apart from the fact that both were JC alumni and that their fathers had been postmasters, there was very little in common between them.

But then despite these differences they got along well. Shanthi left her Vaddukkoddai home and went to Moolai, Chulipuram to live with her husband. Naturally, there were many adjustments to be made. But Shanthi rose up to the challenge and transformed her life in accor-



**Jaffna University:**  
Pic by HumanityAshore

dance with changed circumstances.

With the birth of their children life indeed changed for the better. The eldest was a girl Sangeetha followed by two boys Shavendra and Sanjendra.

I recall carrying Sangeetha as an infant in 1981. Shanthi laughed and laughed seeing my nervous clumsiness and discomfiture with her baby. I think the last time I saw the kids was in 1987. I saw Shanthi for the last time in Colombo in 1988.

Both Sangeetha and Shavendra are in the UK while Sanjendra is a lecturer in the Law department of Jaffna university. Sangeetha is married to Uthayashangar her cousin. Shanthi became a proud "ammamma" when their child Uthesan alias Timmy was born.

Whenever I visited Jaffna in the eighties of the last century I made it a point to visit the Jaffna university. The two persons I went to meet there specifically were both at the English dept. One was AJ Canagaretna, The other was of course Shanthi.

**Moolai residence**

I have also stayed with Shanthi and Vicks at their Moolai residence at times. Sometimes for several days at a stretch. Even my younger sister who also studied at JC has stayed with them.

It was very fortunate that Vignarajah and I communicated easily with each other and became friends soon. Thus I was a welcome guest with the family.

There is a saying that a friend in need is a friend indeed. Shanthi and Vicks were exactly that. There was a time when I was faced with an "emergency" of sorts and required urgent help. Shanthi got to know about it and together with Vignarajah provided assistance on their own without my even asking for it.

Unfortunately I was slow in discharging my obligations due to unexpected developments and as

a result they had to undergo difficulties till I did so fully. But Shanthi's faith in me never faltered during those days. Her strength indeed was her unshakable faith. In her God and religion, her family, friends and humanity in general.

The LTTE was ruling the roost in Jaffna from the mid-eighties of the last century. This was a time when the legal profession in Jaffna was hit drastically. The practice of law virtually ceased and members of the black-coated fraternity swelled the ranks of unemployed. Later the LTTE established its own courts, lawyers and judges.

Like many other lawyers, Vignarajah too was affected. Shanthi was then a tower of strength to him and the family. She was sustained by her faith. Shanthi was always a religious person but had later on become evangelized as a born again Christian. It was this faith that made her strong and brave in times of trouble. One incident stands out in memory.

**Views on LTTE**

Vignarajah was closely associated with the TULF leader Appapillai Amirthalingam and was involved in politics then. Amirthalingam himself was in India. The tigers were angry with Vignarajah for organizing a meeting to commemorate Amirthalingam.

One day Shanthi was returning home to Moolai after work. When the mini-bus stopped at the junction before her stop she saw a crowd there. To her shock, Shanthi saw Vignarajah's motor cycle on the ground and some tiger cadres surrounding her husband belligerently.

She jumped out of the vehicle and ran to the spot. Arguing vehemently with the tigers, Shanthi managed to persuade them to let them go. It was like Savithri of the Puranas saving her husband Sathyavan from the clutches of Yaman.

Later I asked her what gave her the courage to do so. She said that she had no time to think and only saw that her husband was in trouble. She was also sure that God would protect her. Such was her faith.

In 1995 the Sri Lankan Government established its writ over Jaffna again. The Judicial system was gradually restored. Vignarajah himself mounted the bench first as a magistrate and then as District judge. Currently he is the High Court judge in Jaffna.

Shanthi's prayers were answered. However she continued at the University till March this year when she had to stop working due to her ill-health.

Shanthi was quite candid with her views on the LTTE. She disapproved of many tiger activities and never hesitated to articulate them when necessary. But the LTTE too tolerated this "dissent" because the tigers knew Shanthi was simply being honest and had no hidden agenda.

Selva Gajendran the TNA Jaffna district Parliamentarian was at one time the LTTE run student union president at the Jaffna university. On one occasion a foreign journalist interviewed Gajendran and requested Shanthi to interpret. She obliged.

At one point the journalist asked Gajendran whether it was possible for LTTE critics to survive in Jaffna. Gajendran then pointed to Shanthi and said "Yes. Madam here, is one such example".

**Prize giving**

Shanthakumari Vignarajah was one who helped others and gave of her time to deserving causes. Shanthi has helped numerous people in need generously. All these things were done quietly without any publicity.

She played a significant role in the activities of the peace council and high security zone committee in Jaffna. Many officials were impressed by her but she always shunned the limelight.

A rare occasion where Shanthi sought the limelight was denied her recently. The Vignarajahs were invited as chief guests for the annual Jaffna College prize giving. Shanthi was to give away the prizes.

Shanthi had studied at JC from grade 1 to 12 and was very fond of the crimson and gold. Having received prizes year after year in School, the opportunity of handing them out would have been relished by her. She had some years ago proposed the vote of Thanks at the prize giving.

But despite Shanthi's determination her health did not permit it. So it was her daughter Sangeetha who stood in for her and distributed the prizes. But Shanthi's name is on the prize giving day programme.

Among the many things I admired the Vignarajahs for was their attachment to their land and people. Shanthi and Vicks stayed in Jaffna amidst much trouble and violence undergoing terrible hardship and suffering.

Both could have easily gone abroad as their siblings are all in foreign countries. They did not want to desert Jaffna and remained rooted to the soil rendering service to their people. I salute them both for that.

**To be with god**

Sadly Shanthi was afflicted with cancer and had a breast removed a few years ago. However this was only a reprieve



and there was a malignant resurgence that proved fatal. Her condition deteriorated rapidly and her days were numbered. Her children and sister returned to Jaffna to be with her.

The pain was terrible but Shanthi bore it all with her customary grit and tried to be cheerful. Once again her faith was her strength. She waited for the end with the supreme confidence that she was going to be with God. This is what she told family and friends frequently

Shanthakumari breathed her last at 7. 15 pm on July 28th. Her husband, three children and grandson were around her as she bade farewell. Her sister from Denmark had been with her for several weeks but had gone to Colombo for a brief visit when Shanthi passed away.

Shanthi had three wishes as her end drew near. She wanted her sister Arasakumari to be with her during her last days. She wanted her family to be with her when she died. She wanted to be buried at Vaddukkoddai by the side of her parents. All her wishes were fulfilled.

Though Shanthi had become an evangelical Christian the CSI bishop of Jaffna Rt. Rev Daniel Thiyagarajah consented to her burial at Vaddukkoddai. There was a service at Cathedral Church, Vaddukkoddai and Shanthi's remains were laid to rest at the Church cemetery. In her own words Shanthi is now with God.

I am indeed blessed to have been her friend. She was one who understood me well, tolerated my faults, gave of her friendship and never demanded anything in return. Such souls are rare in this world.

I thank God for Shanthi as she abides with the almighty. My thoughts are with her family and friends.

"Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!

But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me".

Courtesy: [dbsjeyaraj.com](http://dbsjeyaraj.com)

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**MONSOON  
FEATURE**

# About Ramadan Kareem and Do's & Don't

The month of Ramadan is one of the pillars of our Deen in which Allah has granted us an opening to refocus our lives on our path to him. Our program aims to inspire and stimulate the inward and outward growth of Muslims throughout the country. We will showcase, highlight, celebrate and inform the nation on Ramadan.

According to the Holy Quran

One may eat and drink at any time during the night "until you can plainly distinguish a white thread from a black thread by the daylight: then keep the fast until night".

Ramadan is the holiest month for any Muslim. It was during this month that the Quran was revealed to the Final Messenger of Islam, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It was also during Ramadan that Salaah (prayer) was revealed to the Prophet.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar. The Month of Ramadan is also when it is believed the Holy Quran "was sent down from heaven, guidance unto men, a declaration of direction, and a means of Salvation".

Ramadan is the month of fasting. During this period Muslims abstain from all sorts of food, drink and any activity deemed improper. The month is used as a sort of cleansing period for the body and a rejuvenation of the soul. During Ramadan the Angels descend upon earth to shower people with the blessings of Allah.

Mosques are filled with the faithful coming to listen to the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran. Ramadan starts with the sighting of the new moon. As

In our normal living, we are bound by desires and aversions, because creation itself is a state of delusion that makes us forget our true Self, our eternal nature of joy and wisdom. Creation is like a hypnosis, wherein we forget our real identity. The hypnotized subjects cannot come out of their hypnosis without the help of the hypnotist.

God has hypnotized us through His act of creation, into believing that we are separate, limited, finite beings. Therefore only God the Divine Hypnotist or Mayadevi (the Goddess of Delusion) can bring us out of our delusion or maya. There can be no salvation without the grace of God, and the Masters are God's loving grace, calling us to be free from the bondage of delusion.

For salvation or liberation, it is important to find an enlightened Master, and be guided by him or her in everyday living, especially in meditation. There are many false gurus. Selecting a true one is not easy. However a sincere search has to draw a genuine Master toward the spiritual seeker.

AUGUST 2009											SEPTEMBER 2009																			
RAMADAN DAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
DATE	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
DAY	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
SUHOOR (AM)	4.26	4.26	4.27	4.27	4.28	4.28	4.28	4.29	4.29	4.29	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.31	4.31	4.31	4.32	4.32	4.32	4.33	4.33	4.33	4.34	4.34	4.34	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.37	4.37
IFTAR (PM)	6.50	6.49	6.48	6.47	6.46	6.45	6.44	6.43	6.42	6.41	6.40	6.39	6.38	6.37	6.36	6.35	6.34	6.33	6.32	6.31	6.30	6.29	6.28	6.27	6.26	6.25	6.24	6.23	6.22	6.21

Time difference : Abu Dhabi + 4 min, Al Ain -3 min, RAK -4 min, Fujairah -6 min, Dhaid -2 min

\*\*\*\*\* UAE Tamil Sangam  
www.uaetamilsangam.com

Islam prescribes this has to be done with the naked eye. Members of the Crescent Observers Society gather at various places around the country to scan the horizon for the sighting of the new moon. In Cape Town many people gather at places such as Three Anchor Bay on the Atlantic seaboard as well as Signal Hill to look for the new moon. Once the sighting has been confirmed it is relayed to members of the Muslim Judicial Council whose president makes the announcement that Ramadan is upon the Muslims and the fast-

ing period will commence the following day.

During the month of Ramadan Muslims are encouraged to pray more, do more for their fellow brothers and sisters in the form of giving alms to the poor as well as increase their knowledge on the religion. Introspection and enlightenment are key words for Muslims in Ramadan.

Laylatul Qadr (Night of Power) is found on an odd night during the last ten days of Ramadan. It was on this night that the Quran was revealed to the Prophet via the Angel Gabriel. The night holds

special significance for Muslims because the rewards of prayer are said to equal that of a thousand nights.

Ramadan in South Africa is a unique experience. The Muslim population here may number only 2 million but they have a big influence in the country. For South African Muslims, the concept of Ramadan has been inculcated from an early age. Ramadan is a month for those who believe in the concept of One God, Allah and the message of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Ramadan is the month during

which the revelation of the Quran began which shows all humanity the clear path leading to its ultimate goal, revealing those permanent values whereby one can distinguish truth from falsehood. The discipline learned through fasting is an annual training to remain in a state of preparedness for the accomplishment of this lofty program. Hence a person who is at home during this month should fast. If a person is sick or on a journey, he should, as already stated, complete the prescribed number of fasts by fasting on other days (and the concession allowed to a person who cannot fast except with great hardship has been mentioned earlier). Allah Almighty wants to make things easy for you and does not want to subject you to hardships and difficulties. Mark again that fasting is not a mere rite. Its purpose is to enable you to establish on the one hand supremacy of the Divine Laws in the world, in the light of the Guidance given to you and on the other enable you to nourish your own potentialities.

## Do's and Don't

Don't smoke, drink or eat in public during the hours of sunrise to sunset. This includes while you are driving as well as in public places such as shopping malls.

Do smoke, drink and eat in the privacy of your home or hotel room.

Don't be overly rowdy. Keep stereos on low volume while driving, on the beach or in your house, so as not to disturb your Muslim neighbors.

Do give food to the poor. Ramadan is renowned for its charitable nature.

Do get sociable in the evenings for Iftar.

Do say Ramadan Kareem.

Courtesy: UAE Tamil Sangam, <http://www.uaetamilsangam.com>

## MEDITATION



and completely. Do such deep breathing four or five times. Then allow your breath to be natural, without controlling it in any way. While breathing in, say "Ham" mentally. Breathing out, mentally say: "Sa.". There should be no strain or tension in meditation. The most important habit to cultivate is observing the breath calmly, without looking for results. Anxiety for results creates tension, and defeats the purpose of

meditation.

Distractions are bound to come; ignore them without being upset about them. Remember that meditation is an attempt to be still, the results are in God's hands, and every sincere effort brings us closer to God, though we may not feel it at all. Meditate for about ten minutes at the start. Increase the duration very gradually. End the meditation, by being still, feeling the peace, and then talking to God lovingly.

Those who wish to meditate on Christ, can start in the same manner, while breathing in, mentally say "Jesus" or "Jesu;" breathing out, mentally say: "Amen" or "OM." Amen stands for Christ, the word of God [Rev. 3:14]. OM is the primary vibration of Divine Consciousness leading to creation. Thus OM is another name for God. Amen and OM have the same connotation.

Always remember that meditation is the art of relaxation and concentration. While learning this art, utmost patience is needed. It is an ascetical practice which definitely purifies you, unlike the severe acts of penance from the

past ages, such as hair shirts, flagellation and so on.

Even children can be taught to meditate by observing their breath, since it enhances their attention span and memory. Some companies found increases in productivity and less absenteeism, after introducing the practice of meditation to their workers. In general, a significant consequence of meditation is the improvement of emotional intelligence in people.

Meditation at times leads to certain spiritual experiences. Take care not to talk about them indiscriminately. Such talk increases vanity and egoism, thereby hiding God even more. Our personal relationship with God is sacred and secret, like genuine lovers being unable to reveal their acts of intimacy. The purpose of spiritual practices is not passing experiences, however pleasant they may be, but abiding lovingly in God's Holy Presence, the peace and joy of Silence.

(Extracted from the book 'Living with Saints and Sages' by Devadas Chelvam)

# Ethnic Cleansing of Tamils Democratically in Sri Lanka

**Arun Senathirajah**

Numerous requests to Sri Lankan Government to show a justifiable solution or political reconciliation to Tamil minority have been totally and continuously ignored by the Sinhala regime. Now newly appointed permanent representative to the UN, Palitha Kohona has openly echoed President Mahinda Chinthana of 'There is no Tamil ethnic problem in Sri Lanka'. Palitha Kohona has explicitly rejected political solutions to the Tamil national question. 'There is this thinking that all our problems can be solved by applying a political solution. I fail to see the logic behind this,' he has said to a local media. He is of the opinion that there was no need for a political solution to North and East, as Tamils are not majority there anymore. 'Where are we going to apply this solution? Are we going to do that to the 54% of those living in and around Colombo or those in the North and East? In the North the entirety of the Tamil population is 750,000. There were 300,000 in the Wannai area who are now in the camps. There's no one outside the Wannai area. The total number in the Jaffna peninsula is miniscule compared to the rest of the island,' he said rejecting any problems to Tamils.

## Systematic Cleansing

Having systematically adopted multi-pronged strategies targeting total wipe out of Tamil ethnic population in the island using the numerous methods for the last 60 years, now Sri Lanka has come out to tell the world that Tamils are not majority in the NorthEast of Sri Lanka to give them political solution, depicting that as they really had a political solution, but there are no Tamils to accept the solution. Mass scale massacres village by village, at the highest level what has taken place during the last days of the war, abductions and killings, land encroachments, settling Sinhala convicts in Tamil lands under Government sponsored large scale irrigation projects, High Security Zones - forfeiture of Tamil residential and cultivable lands for military camps and subsequent Sinhala settlements, deliberately making starvation and stopping Medical supplies - A9 closure, forcibly settling Tamils among Sinhalese to suppress their voices and political rights, declaration of sacred sites only for constitutionally protected Buddhism, schemed Buddhist archeological findings in Tamil lands, erection of Buddhist statues in public, military camps and Hindu temple premises in Tamil area, creating fisheries villages by threatening and chasing away Tamil villagers from their homes, merging part of Tamil electorate with Sinhala electorates or districts, silencing Tamil media etc. This list can be elaborated more. Sinhala chauvinistic political leaders have united in keeping Tamils in open prison in Jaffna, keeping 300,000 in the UN Secretary General Bai-Ki Moon assisted internment camps, after massacring more than 100,000 and keeping

Eastern Province Tamils in the hands of paramilitary rule. So, now Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse has selected Palitha Kohona to the UN as the permanent secretary, because of his qualification of having opinion of 'Tamil needs no political solution'. As directed by Mahinda Rajapakse this is the message Palitha Kohona now has to go and tell the UN and western countries which fully supported Sri Lanka in massacring more than 50,000 Tamils at the end of the war with LTTE and keeping quiet for ill-treating 300,000 Tamils in with the support of UN Secretary General Bai-Ki Moon and his officials.

## Incarcerated camps

As like Sri Lankan government used its own declared safety zone during the final days of the war, to bulldoze more than 50,000 Tamils, now the 300,000 Tamils internment camps are being used as interment ground for their lives and future. Now Sri Lanka says around 280,000 are in there and the rest of 20,000 have escaped from camps. This is an utter lie to cover up the daily abductions by the military and white van paramilitaries and the civilians abducted never returned back. In the same way the international communities, the Co-chairs and the former US president George W Bush's choice Bai-ki Moon led United Nations are keeping mere silent and watching thereby giving approval to the Sinhala Buddhist Chauvinistic rulers led Sri Lanka to gradually annihilate the Tamil IDPs in the UN funded interment - correction - internment camps, after merely making some press releases for political reconciliation has to be undertaken by the Sri Lanka government. Now it is understood all the Tamil health authorities and doctors in charge of the camps have also been replaced by Sinhalese in order to cover up the realities of the conditions and reporting of the camp situations, while military personnel already have the overall administrative control of the civilian camps.

## Political Reconciliation to Deny Self Determination Right

Simply the word 'reconciliation' means in accounting terms, numerical values in both sides should agree and be equal. This is not in fact what the western countries and the UN are advising ethnic cleansing Sri Lankan government and the oppressed Tamils in their own lands. What they really meant is 'whatever your sufferings are please live in peacefully, don't fight each other, otherwise that would harm our interests in the South Asian region, our MNCs (Multi-National Corporations) cannot exploit your resources peacefully. Therefore the reconciliation is necessary. We only concerned of our economic interests and strategic alliances, we do not worry about how many people die or being massacred by each other in your region, but if that happens in Europe or America we will take all out efforts to stop it at any cost. Further we are white people, you may be brown or black we don't



care.'

Upholding Buddhism as the official religion constitutionally, after the rejection of local election by Tamil population in Jaffna and the loss to Tamil National Alliance party in Vavuniya, Mahinda Rajapakse schemed to dismantle the even democratically fighting political parties which bear the ethnic or religious identity for the minorities rights also could not be tolerated and took efforts make them illegal. Sinhala parties like SLFP, JVP, JHU, UNP etc representing the Buddhist Sinhalese are more in reality thrusting communal feeling on the already oppressed minorities Tamils and Muslims in the country. This is also one of the ethnic 'reconciliation' efforts taken by Sri Lanka to solve the ethnic problem democratically in Sri Lanka. 'Reconciliation' is a new glossary term to forgo your self determination right discovered by westerners who supplied funds and weapons to exterminate Tamils and their rights politically.

Democracy advocating western powers also kept silence when democratically elected Tamil MPs and political leaders like Joseph Pararajasingam, Nadarajah Raviraj, and Vigneswaran were massacred by paramilitary groups with the full support of 'Democratic Socialistic Republic of Sri Lanka'. All the time they covered up Sri Lanka because it has a democratically elected government. 'Democracy' going parallel with majority Sinhalese in Sri Lanka can exterminate all the minorities in the country; even then its democratic status is supreme only for the oppressor. This old democratic concept of 'majority governance' should be thrashed away and human values should be upheld.

## Media Freedom

The 20 years imprisonment sentence to journalist Mr Tissainayagam is the symbol of "democratic media freedom rights" for media people in Sri Lanka. Whoever tries to bring the truths out are 'democratically well awarded' by Sri Lanka government as it has happened Mr Tissainayagam and Tharaki Sivaram. For foreign independent media personnel they deported or their visa is rejected. Worldwide uproar and rejection of this sentence has embarrassed the Sri Lankan rulers. Now the embarrassed Sri Lankan President has schemed through one of his minister to request presidential pardon to the journalist. Since 'Democratic



addition, as another plot to bring Pakistani forces in Sri Lanka - south of India, Lankan army Chief Lt General Jagath Jayasuriya has announced that anti-guerilla warfare schools would be established in Tamil dominated Mullaitivu, Killinochchi and Vavuniya to train Pakistani army personnel. It is a laughing reason that Sri Lanka to train Pakistani forces in combating terrorism, considering Pakistan forces' enormous experience in war and tactical training in combating extremists. On the other hand Pakistan military's mighty position and its weapons that played key role in defeating the LTTE. Compared to India, a tiny Sri Lankan island is now all the way out to build up its armed forces with 300,000 personnel with the assistance of China and Pakistan saying that it is necessary to combat any Tamil rebellion in the future. Sri Lanka's real motive is strategic alliance against India with China and Pakistan; if necessary it may use its 300,000 forces against India with its alliances. What is going to take place in the near future is India has to inevitably make an offensive invasion on Sri Lanka in order to bring it under its control in order to thwart continued presence of Pakistan and Chinese military presence. Sri Lanka also building its forces to withstand any possible Indian attack with the help of China and Pakistan. This situation might arise one day when Tamil Nadu start pressing the Indian central decision makers equitable solution for Eelam Tamils in their homeland. When this started to reflect in Indian policy towards Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka with its firepower and 300,000 troops will openly align with Indian enemies China and Pakistan.

Western democratic governments and diplomats who deceive humanity by projecting Sri Lanka as a 'democratically elected government' to safeguard their MNCs' interest by keeping Tamils only at survival level as they treat the First Nations peoples in their own countries so that they can have a reliable workforce for their industrial bases. Their standpoint would help Sinhala Buddhist supremacist nationalism to achieve the objective of Genocide of the Tamil people. While on one hand verbally urging Colombo to curb impunity in human rights, the international community on the other hand rationalizes the impunity of state terrorism and illegitimate sovereignty of Sri Lanka over the minority ethnic groups in the island.

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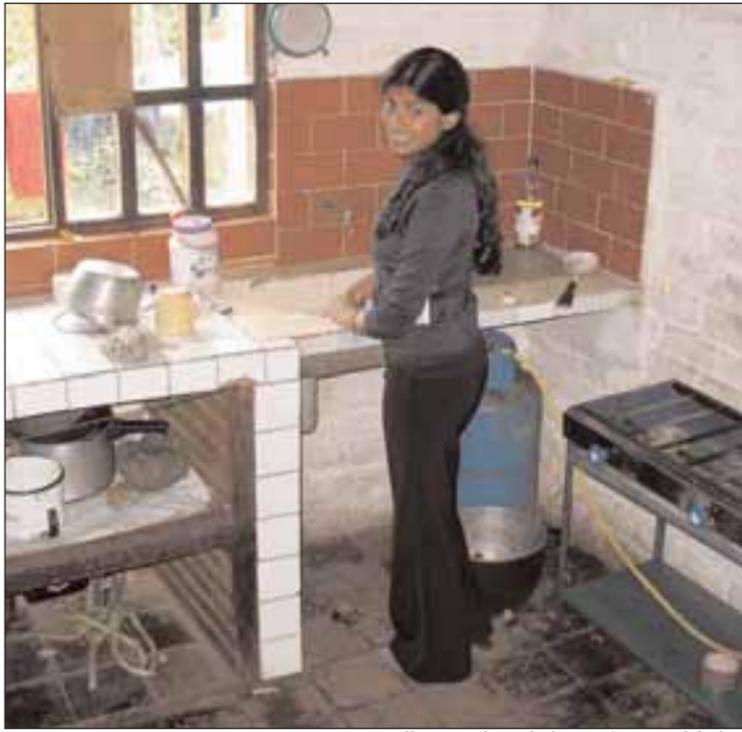
**MONSOON  
FEATURE**

**By: Winthya  
Varatheswaran**

In part 2 of my educational experience, I revealed all the medical tasks I performed, some unforgettable memories and the hard work I did to adapt, learn and live a new life. By the time I knew it, two months were coming to an end and there was only one and a half months left in Ecuador. Just when we were getting used to the Ecuadorian life, we realized that we were going to have to depart to Canada soon.

Since we were half way through the program, our host families needed a break from the Canadians and we needed a break from speaking Spanish, so the whole International Co-operative Education (ICE) group set off to the coast of Manabí, Ecuador. The coast was absolutely beautiful with exotic plants, animals and beaches! It was like landing in paradise after living in the cold,

# An Educational Experience in Ecuador - The Finale (Part 3)



or people to earn some money to support himself and his family, despite his disabilities. From this man, we learned that confidence,

all wondered how it would be when we left our host families that we lived with for three months. With all the fun times we



My friends in Ecuador were also a big part of my Ecuadorian life. My friends there were all the little children on my street that I played with during my free time. They would come to my house every day after school and call my name outside the gates to come out and play. Although I was almost 10 years older than most of them, I enjoyed playing games with them because they took my mind off of all the stress that came my way.

The last few days with my host family, co-workers and friends went by quicker than I thought it would, and by the time I knew it, I was on a plane back to Toronto. I some-what knew what I was going to experience in Ecuador; however, no one prepared us for the emotional distress that downed upon us on the day of our departure. Each host

parent, sister, aunt and cousin came to me and said goodbye, each crying as they left. My last day with my host family was horrible because they couldn't stop crying and I couldn't either. When I got into a van to leave to the city with some of the ICE girls, we found out that we were all feeling the same way, so our ride back to the hostel was filled with tears, laughter and more tears. We were all very lucky to have each other to share our feelings and slowly complete the last stages of ICE. Adapting, integrating, learning a new language and the whole ICE experience gave me more knowledge, experience, life skills, relationships and a chance to develop myself into a global citizen. I learned that this wasn't the ending, but the beginning of a new chapter in my life.



rainy Andes weather. After some meetings, assignments and tests we hit the beach to relax, have fun and enjoy a whole new culture. One of my favourite parts of the coast was when we volunteered for an ecological group in the town of Las Tunas. The ICE group and I helped clean garbage from the beaches, paint walls and signs, and rake paths through a mangrove forest to promote ecotourism in Las Tunas.

Although we were having fun and volunteering, the group never stopped learning new things every day. To learn the way of life by the coast, we visited a place where fishermen brought in their fish and we asked them many questions to learn their lifestyles. I learned that fishing was the main source of income for most families and that the poverty was much worse in Manabí than Quito. We also met one man that couldn't walk, so he had made this bike that allowed him to use his hands to pedal and carry fish

optimism, strength and the ability to never give up is essential in life.

After learning about new cultures, tasting delicious coast food and having fun on the beach, it was time for us to meet our coast families. My coast family was very different from my Andean family because they were young and had 3 small children. Another ICE student and I quickly adapted to their simple, laid back way of life by playing soccer with all the local children, taking 2 minute showers, laying on the hammocks, tanning on the beach and eating fresh seafood. Unlike in Quito where we would all be in bed by 8 O' clock, we lived the night life at the coast with late night ice cream shop visits and dance lessons. However, our time at the coast went by quickly and we had to return back to our host families in Quito. While we only stayed with our coast families for three days, it was still very sad and emotional to leave them, and we

had, we not only left with good memories but also with planned goals of what we wanted to fulfill for the rest of the program.

When I returned back to Quito, my host parents and sister were very happy to see me again and I was happy to share the pictures and stories from my trip with them. For the next month, I continued washing my clothes with my hands on a rock, selling harvested vegetables in the market, working on the farm, feeding the guinea pigs, gathering crops and getting up in the morning at 4:00. A typical day of mine would be waking up at 4:00, jog until the sun rises, go to work, finish assignments, help with house work, work on the farm and then finally go to bed around 8:00. This lifestyle was not easy for me to adapt to, but I took it as a challenge and learned how to live this new life. Over the course of these three months, I not only got used to the host family's life, but I also became a member of their family.

## TD Canada Trust sponsors Gerrard India Bazaar Festival

The TD Canada Trust Festival of South Asia took place on Gerrard Street E. between Greenwood and Coxwell Ave from August 21st to August 23rd.

The Gerrard street was

closed at Noon on Saturday August 22 and reopened to the public at midnight on Sunday August 23rd. All the businesses remained opened as usual and participated in the celebrations as 100,000 people attended.



(L-R) Dilani Gunarajah, Barrister & Solicitor, William Hatanaka, Group Head, Global Wealth Management Chairman and CEO TD Waterhouse Canada Inc., Shamala Kumar, PFP, Small Business Adviser and other senior staffs from TD Canada Trust

# I'M A LIMELIGHT MOTH'

A family friend, a doctor, took a four-year-old kid to a party. He was the cynosure with his saucer eyes and ready repartee. A producer who probably didn't get Daisy Irani's dates asked him if he'd act. "Sure, but I want a Plymouth," said the kid. A spanking new Plymouth picked him up the next day but only to take him to the studio. Kamal Hassan was literally taken for a ride, but that was to be his baptism with grease paint in Kalathoor Kanamma, five decades ago. A few films, a National award and the loss of his front teeth later, Kamal spent his growing up years learning Bharatanatyam and karate.

Kamal's ascent to stardom coincided with the twilight years of the veterans MGR and Sivaji Ganesan. He was like a breath of fresh air. At a time when acting meant exaggeration, Kamal ushered in an era of subtlety. "In the beginning directors sneered, 'Don't give us this Malayalam stuff. Give us some real Tamil acting.' However, when someone gave a decent performance and it was compared to mine I felt proud," says Kamal.



Poignant tales From 16 Vayadhinile.

Just when people were branding him lover-boy, came 16 Vayadhinile.

As the drooling village idiot, Chappani Kamal's performance was a tour de force. "I like an image simply so that I can break it," says Kamal. He followed it up as the suave psychopath played to perfection in Sigappu Rojakkal and the buck-toothed imbecile in Kalyana Raman.

It's only when other actors try to fill his shoes in remakes that you realise his greatness — be it Amol Palekar in Solva Saal, Rajesh Khanna in Red Rose or Dharmendra in Ghazab. The consummate trapeze artiste walking the tightrope between class and crass, Kamal seemed to falter in the late Seventies. Co-incidentally, a bus conductor from Bangalore, Rajnikant, stormed the Tamil screen. Kamal had a string of flops, while Rajnikant ascended the throne. Kamal produced his 100th film, Raja Parvai. The sensitive tale about a blind violinist won critical acclaim, but failed. "My favourite possession is a letter from a fan written in blood after Raja Parvai. It said I was a good actor and ink would not suffice. I wonder if I would do that for anyone," sighs Kamal.

If genius can be associated with acting then Kamal is one. It's not as if he's incapable of indifferent performances but the great ones outnumber the bad ones. No other Indian actor has audiences waiting with bated breath for the sheer diversity of roles he plays. The delineation of characters when he played two or more roles in a film is fascinating. The hallmark of a great actor is comic timing and Kamal is sheer magic. Even Nagesh agreed.

Looking back In a career spanning five decades, Kamal Hassan has constantly reinvented himself, says s.shiva kumar, writing in The Hindu:



Moonram Pirai.

Applause is an actor's aphrodisiac and Kamal seeks it unabashedly. "I'm a limelight moth," is his refrain. The only period when creativity was a casualty was his tryst with Hindi cinema. His southern hits were pho-

tocopied and the original were banal. Today he's come a long way. He's traversed the length and breadth of the country breaking linguistic barriers and leaving audiences incredulous with his inexhaustible repertoire. Unnaipol Oruvan (remake of A Wednesday) is definitely not a film or role that benefits his talent but you allow him his indulgences. What's exciting is that he's signed Mysskin, the most promising young talent in Tamil cinema to direct him.

The first five decades have been fascinating. We can't wait for the second.



Nayagan.

## A MAN OF MANY WORDS



Lyricist Viveka is all thrilled for all the songs penned by him in Kanthaswamy have gone on to become big hits. Flooded with offers, Viveka is busy working in 70 films, which includes some biggies.

Says the happy lyricist, 'I had to struggle

hard to get a break in the industry. Fortunately some of my songs in recent films like Unakum Enakum ( Kozhi Vedakozhi), Santosh Subramaniam (Eppadi Irundha) and Villu (Daddy Mummy) went on to top charts. Adding jewel to his crown has come the numbers in Kanthaswamy.'

'Once the audio of Kanthaswamy was released, my phone keeps ringing non-stop with congratulatory message.

It has also brought with it several offers.' His forthcoming films include Vettaikaran, Singam, Mappillai, Nai Kutty, Eeram, Singam Puli, Thilalangadi, Kanthakottai and Vanji Kottai Valiban. Thanking director Susi Ganesan, music

composer Devi Sri Prasad and producer S Thanu, Viveka says, 'the trio encouraged me to give my best in Kanthaswamy. They kept immense faith in my talents. Thankfully I lived up to it.'

A voracious reader, Viveka says, 'one can develop writing skills only after through reading. I have a big library in my house. My day is incomplete without browsing through several pages of a book.' A great admirer of lyricists like Kannadasan and Vairamuthu, Viveka says, 'I want myself to be remembered as a lyricist who can write any genre of a song.'

Simple words and catchy lyric always catch the imagination of children. I am happy all my songs have become instant hit with children, he says and adds, 'I hope that my journey has just began and I still have a long way to go.'

### Double delight for Jeeva

Doing dual roles demands immense effort from an artist. He should get his body language correct, says actor Jeeva who is donning a double role in Singam Puli.

Directed by debutant Sai Ramani and produced by Silverline Factories, Singam Puli

features Dhivya Spandanas opposite Jeeva. Search is on for the other heroine. Santhamma, Ponvannan and Kuyili are also in the cast.

Jeeva who made a name for himself doing unique roles in films like E, Pori, Thamizh MA and Siva Manasula Sakthi has shot all through the day for the movie. Says the director, 'we shot scenes involving one of the role enacted by Jeeva in the morning, while in the evenings he would do the other role, which is bubbly and enthusiastic.'

It is an action-packed entertainer that would attract audience, he says and adds, 'I am fortunate to direct a seasoned actor like Jeeva in my first film itself. He is a bundle of energy and very cooperative on the sets. It would be an important movie in Jeeva's career and would take him to greater heights in the industry.'

Mani Sharma has composed the music for lyrics penned by Na Muthukumar and Viveka. Produced by S Parthiban and S S Vasana, Singam Puli would be shot in Hyderabad, Vishakapattinam and in foreign countries including Singapore and Malaysia.

[newstodaynet]

## Action is where his heart is....

Director Suresh Krissna knows the knack of rendering a commercial entertainer that woos all section of audience. Arumugham is one such film that is racy and entertaining from the word go, says actor Bharath.

Produced by Kool Productions, Arumugham stars Bharath, Priyamani, Ramya Krishnan, Saranya Mohan and Karunaas among others. Set to tunes by Deva, the movie would hit the screens during the third week of September.

Speaking about Suresh Krissna, Bharath says, 'he is a phenomenal filmmaker who has worked with the likes of Rajnikanth, Kamal Haasan, Chiranjeevi and Mohanlal among others. He mass movies like Baasha,

Sathya and Annamalai are still fresh in the minds of film lovers. I am thrilled and happy to have worked with him for Arumugham.'

Dwelling more on the film, he says, 'Suresh Krissna is clear from the beginning that my character will be part of the story. The film has subtle emotions and Suresh Krissna has stuffed it with mass elements that elevates my character.' Bharath denies speaking punch dialogues and performing mindless stunt sequences in this film. Everything has a clear logic in the movie, he says.

The movie is about a youth (played by Bharath) who loses his mother at his young age. He ekes out his livelihood running an eatery on the roadside. He comes across a rich woman played by Ramya Krishnan.

The cat and mouse game between them forms the crux. Priyamani plays Bharath's lover in the movie.

On his part, Suresh Krissna says, 'it is a power-packed film with right commercial elements. Ramya Krishnan plays a powerful character and the encounters between Bharath and Ramya would be interesting.'

Heaping laurels on music composer Deva, Suresh Krissna says, 'I share an excellent rapport with Deva. We teamed to render musical hits in Annamalai, Baasha and Aaha before. For Arumugham, he has given half-a-dozen catchy tunes besides coming out with a scintillating background score.'

The other credits are S K Bhupathy (cinematography), Premji (story, screenplay



and dialogues), Magi (art), Kasi Viswanathan (editing), Thalapathy Dinesh (stunts) and Pa Vijay and Snehan (lyrics).



# CTCC Elects New President

The Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce hosted their Annual General Meeting on Wednesday September 2, 2009 at the Karaikudi Chettinad Restaurant in Toronto. Over 100 members and guests attended the meeting and listened intently as the outgoing President Mr. Gary Anandasangaree gave a briefing about Chamber and thanked all the Past Directors and rest of the members for their services to the Business Association. Mr. Anandasangaree a distinguished lawyer was the President of the CTCC for the past two years and led many events throughout his term including the 1st Annual CTCC Golf Classic, the 11th Annual Chamber Nite held at the Royal York Hotel, the CTCC Walkathon and many more successful events. Proceeding Mr. Anandasangaree for the position of President for the 2009-2010 year is Mr. Ken Kirupa. Mr. Kirupa held many positions on the Board of CTCC including Vice President to Mr. Anandasangaree for the past two years. Mr. Kirupa is a well recognized Real Estate Agent for REMAX and has over 20 years of experience in the financial services industry. As he was called to the stage to speak as the new CTCC President he welcome his new Board of Directors and spoke about bringing change through his words today and his actions tomorrow. He thanked the past presidents for being the building blocks of the Chamber and looks forward to working with his new Board for the exciting year that follows.

The Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce is a pioneer business organization in the Tamil community. Many events have been held by the CTCC that have promoted Tamil businesses. Not only does the CTCC foster business education in the Tamil community but the CTCC has also worked with charitable organizations including the Scarborough Hospital Foundation and the Providence Healthcare Foundation to raise money for very worthy causes. The CTCC is now hosting their 2nd Annual Golf Classic on Wednesday September 16, 2009 that will be held at the Silver Lakes Golf & Country Club in Newmarket. Everyone is welcome to participate in the tournament and sponsorship opportunities are also available for those interested. Contact any of the current Board Members or the Executive Assistant for more information. Below is the full texts of the speeches by outgoing and new President. Also some of the photographs taken at the event.

**Info by Krishni Loganathan**  
**Photos by Ken Photo**

## Full script of the Final Speech made by Gary Anandasangaree, Chamber President for the last 2 years

Good Evening my dear friends, board members, and members.

I want to start this evening by expressing to you my sincerest gratitude for entrusting me with the leadership of this organization for the past two years. Along with my fellow board members, we were able to ensure that the integrity of the Chamber was maintained and enhanced.

Two years ago, the Toronto Star ran an article with a headline "it's a bad year for Tamils". Sadly, they were premature, as the year just past has been a test for all of us who share in the Tamil heritage.

We have seen the death and destruction of thousands of Tamils in the north and east of Sri Lanka. Since this May, there have been 300,000 Tamils languishing in Internment Camps. These include

women, and children.

It is in this backdrop this Board had to operate.

Many of you may ask the questions - why does this matter? And the answer is simple - there isn't a single Tamil Canadian who is not affected by this. Most have someone living at these camps. In fact, many members have their loved ones in these camps. Many Board members have individuals who have their family members at these camps. It is in this backdrop that we as are Board had to make some very difficult choices.

In this, we were assisted by our past Presidents, and our Advisory Board in navigating this years activities.

Simply put, we were unable to function in any meaningful way.

**Contd. in page 41**

## Full script of the acceptance speech by President Ken Kirupa at the AGM

Dear Friends,

This is the 19th year for the chamber, with no immodesty, it can be said that we have grown in many ways and have become stronger in prestige and influence. As we all know, the mission of the Canadian Tamil Chamber of Commerce is to develop and foster entrepreneurship and to help produce business leaders within the Tamil Community. We aim to make Tamil businesses a staple in our economy. Already we can see Tamil businesses have become a backbone of the Canadian economy. This is evident through the sheer number of businesses and growing number of business professionals present in our Tamil business directories. Even in this tough economic time, Tamil entrepreneurs are continuing to open new branches by expanding to new locations. The Tamil Chamber of Commerce undoubtedly played a crucial role in all of this.

At this time, I wish to applaud the board members who have led the chamber for the past 18 years. They have played a vital role in making Tamil businesses a fundamental aspect of the Canadian economy. We should all be grateful to our past presidents, Mr. Kingsley Ariaratnam, Mr. Yogi Tambiraja, Mr. S.R. Rajadurai, Mr. Logan Velumailum, Mr. K. Gnana-chandran, Mr. Kula Sellathurai, Mr. Mohan Sundaramohan, Mr. Mano Thillainathan and Mr. Gary Anandasangaree. These leaders form the pillars of the Tamil Chamber of Commerce and I think they deserve a big round of applause for their accomplishments. I feel honoured to continue the work of these inspiring and dedicated leaders and I accept this position to lead the chamber with gratitude and a full heart.

Most of all, I thank you for the confidence you express in me. Today, I thank you in words. From tomorrow on, I will translate my appreciation into action. I promised to carry out, to the best of my ability, the duties of a President. I may not be able fulfill each and every wish; however, I will strive to accomplish what is most important to the advancement of the Chamber.

**Contd. in page 41**



London Life Bala Jeganathan



New President Ken Kirupa, Realtor with ReMax



New Vice President Sritharan Thuraiarah, a leading Insurance Agent



Outgoing President Gary Anandasangaree, a Practising Lawyer



RBC Mortgage Specialist Nala Brodie



UCMACS Director



WCB Staff at Meeting



Liland Insurance Agents Vasanthan & Guna Selliah, Uthayan Newspaper Chief Editor Logendralingam, SKRP Developer Ramesh and Invis Mortgage Broker Balan Nagarajah



New Board Members



Registration in Progress, Shiyam and Priya volunteering for Administrator Krishni



Section of the Members at the meeting

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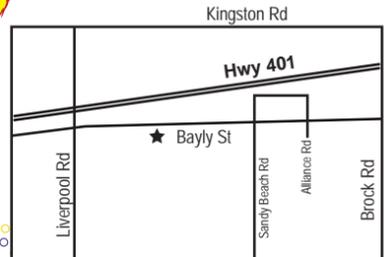
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# CSGA's 8th Annual Invitational Championship 2009

Above event took place on Saturday Sept 5, 2009 at the Richmond Hill Golf Club. Avid golfers representing several schools from Sri Lanka such as Ananda, Nalanda, Royal and St. Patrick's participated in the tournament. Trophies and memorabilias were awarded to winners which was followed by sumptuous buffet type dinner at the club house. Association president Anil Perera welcomed the participants, volunteers and guests and secretary Tissa de Silva delivered the vote of thanks. Sharmini Perera MCed the awards ceremony. Photos by: Gnane



Proud winners of 2009 trophy, Royal College Colombo. L-R: Neowal Jayasekera, Siva Sivakumaran & NJ



Runners up 2009: St. Patrick's College, Jaffna. L-R: Jay Kumar, Kevin Lawrence & Arjuna Edwards with presenter Viresh Fernando



Champion Golfer Rajinda Gunasena (Nalanda) receiving his trophy from CSGA president Anil Perera



Closest to pin winner: Niranjana Wijenath with presenter Lucky Lankakge



Runner-up of open championship: Arjunan Edwards with CSGA president Anil Perera.



Longest drive winner: Niranchan Nadarajah with CSGA secretary Tissa de Silva



Most honest golfer: Noel Perera with CSGA president Anil Perera.



CSGA president Anil Perera welcoming the audience



MC Sharmini Perera compering the show.



Secretary Tissa de Silva thanking.



Young volunteers posing for a group shot.



CSGA committee members



Spouses volunteered at the tournament

- photos by: Gnane (416- 473-5312) -

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and Social Services Network

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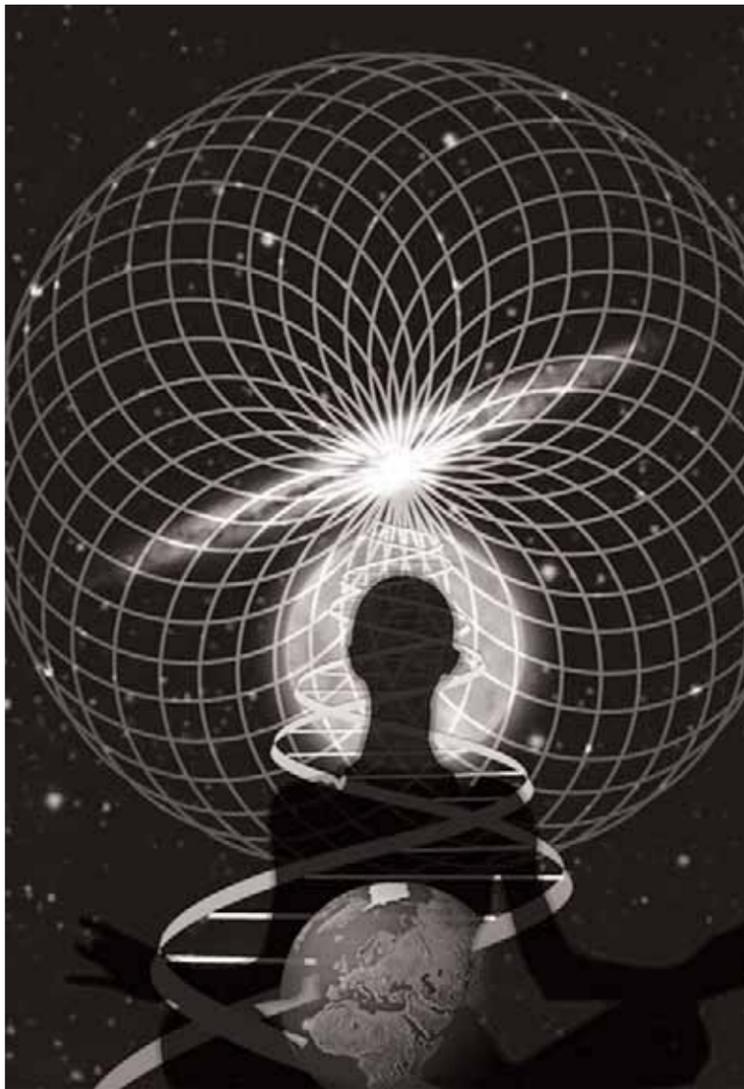
**Samy Appadurai**

It was a very pleasant and warm summer morning on Friday August 21st 2009. It was the beginning of a wonderful week-end filled with a variety of cultural activities ranging from family get-togethers, wedding parties, cultural shows and annual religious celebrations all over the city of Toronto. I had forgone the opportunity to participate in those celebrations and headed to the Sheraton Hotel on highway 404 towards highway seven. I parked my High Lander in the parking lot and headed towards the eastern side of the main building. There was wonderful surprise in that there was a wedding celebration of an East Indian Canadian in progress and a bundle of summer visitors from all over Canada and all corners of the world were moving around enjoying the summer in their own special way. As soon as the volunteers of the Oneness Movement spiritual organization spotted me, a couple of them came towards me with pleasant broad smiles and welcomed me very cordially. My morale lifted sky high. I was taken to the fifth floor and had a preliminary meeting with Shri Anandagiriji, one of the devotees of the inner circle of the oneness organization in India. It was very enlightening and informative. I then left for home and returned back at 3.00 pm to attend the three day seminar.

I entered into the hallway and the volunteers made up mainly of young adults who appeared to be post secondary school students and recent graduates from colleges and universities. They were guiding the participants and they directed me to my seat. The auditorium was fully packed with participants from young people of about 16 years to adults in their 70s. Most were dressed in white symbolizing the creation of the atmosphere for purity in thoughts, emotions and actions. I sat at the south east corner of the tail end and began to watch the entire scene. Although the target audience was mainly Southeast Asians, there were some exceptions. I saw a few East Asians and mainstream Canadians. The way this seminar had been arranged and conducted reminded me of mainstream seminars conducted by high level corporate sector companies in North America. The content of the seminar was rooted in the eastern traditions, but used advanced western technology and presentation formats. For myself, I was least concerned about the package and more interested in the lecture of the seminar.

I was very curious about the nature of the seminar because when I looked around the hall, I could not find any picture, painting, banner or any other display that drew me to a particular religious denomination or inclination towards a specific religious faith. Even on the stage where the presentations were done, there was nothing of that nature. Only a majestic chair covered with a sim-

# SPIRITUALITY WITHOUT RELIGIOUS BORDERS



ple, lovely white cover and a side table with a glass of water graced our presence.

The main item of the entire seminar was the keynote speech of Shri Anandagiriji, and the two way interaction in the form of a discussion with the audience. The speech and discussions were shaped around the issue of human nature and the challenges that we all encounter in life and how to overcome them. In fact in this era of globalization, the entire seminar revolved around the same concept in a spiritual context.

The concept of globalization has become the number one priority of the advanced nations in terms of technology and materialism in particular and the rest of the world in general. It has come to the point where whatever happens in one corner of a particular region or nation reaches the rest of that nation and the entire world simultaneously. This almost instant knowledge does not only pertain to political conflicts, war, etc., but also natural disasters. This knowledge allows us to speak up and demand answers. However, there is much more than the simple sharing of information occurring. People have begun to learn and advance their lives by sharing their wealth, resources, feelings, emotions and respect of fellow human beings as members of the human race, no matter where someone has come from, their background, the shape and color, educational achievements, wealth and social status. Globalization has also had an impact on spirituality. With the

click of a button or a mouse, we can come into contact with many spiritual teachers, groups and resources around the world. This was unheard of even as little as 20 years ago.

It has been widely accepted by many that human beings are the product of the evolutionary process of all things in the world and that this process has been and will continue indefinitely. So far the human race is the most advanced and the current stage is supposed to be the most advanced stage we have ever reached. It does not mean that the human race has reached its optimum level and fulfilled its potential. Scientists have recently told us that the average person uses only 10 percent of the total capacity of their brain. Sometimes I wonder what if the human race reached the stage of utilizing the other 90%, how this world would look and how our lives would reflect this advancement.

When we talk about the advancement of human life in association with the materialistic world, we are confined to the external world and advancement of qualities and physical features. Of course there is no denial or any underestimation of the current progress collectively made by modern man. The creation of the universe with billions of stars, planets and space took place almost 15 billion years ago. Our planet Earth is only 4.6 billion years old. If a Neanderthal or Cro-Magnon man happened to visit our modern earth, he might wonder if this is the same earth he knew so long ago. Mankind

has brought about many changes on this planet even though we have been here a very short time.

The bottom line is that over the course of time and space, the primary objective of human life is to be happy. This idea has never been changed by our civilization and technological development from the primitive nomads to the advanced society we have today. From a man who got totally empowered by materialistic comforts to a spiritual leader who commits most of his time and energy to living in the spiritual world would not dispute that they are making every possible effort to be happy as long as they can. The definition of happiness varies from person to person; the source of one man's happiness might not be the same for another as the saying "one man's food is another man's poison." would tell us. The question of achieving happiness also has many dimensions.

**Samy Appadurai is a renowned broadcast journalist, author, educator and public speaker who makes his home in Toronto.**

For example, the momentary happiness that you acquire from the material world is not everlasting. At times, a person engaged in consuming drugs, drinking alcohol or any other destructive habit achieves happiness at the expense of the future. Some may claim that they are leading a normal life and experience ups and downs now and then. Though it is extremely hard to evaluate the happiness and the unhappiness that we have experienced in our entire life span, it has been accepted that almost all of us have failed in the examination. Rather, many of us have scored very low and have failed miserably.

It is an endless battle because the nature of the human mind is that once you satisfy a need, instantly another need arises and we must fill the void. The needs and the wants can never be satisfied as a whole. We may classify them as the fundamental and optional, but still it occupies a certain portion of the mind. Reaching happiness and retaining it is also a state of mind. It cannot be visualized, but experienced and cannot be totally expressed or conveyed to others.

I have noticed that a pop song with the line "Don't worry be happy" has been very popular for more than a decade among mainstream Canadians. Having accumulated a huge amount of wealth, attaining higher positions



or whatever else, are the means of happiness, not happiness itself. A poor man who lives in a small cottage unable to have three square meals a day and who is content mostly with whatever he has may be happier than Mr. George W. Bush, the former president of the USA who was worried and frustrated about the terrorist attacks and economic downslide in his entire presidential career. Here, the higher volume of materialistic means failed to help him achieve and maintain happiness.

Living a contented life with whatever you have may upset your degree of happiness when you are comparing yourself with others. This can spark jealousy and angry and ill feelings. As Aristotle mentioned "man is a social animal" and it means that man cannot survive without having direct or indirect social involvement. You might have noticed this summer someone driving his luxury car with the convertible roof lifted through the busy roads downtown. They may want to show off and draw the attention of others to whom he might not have any connection or any benefit from and feel happy. It shows that he is trying to satisfy his social needs.

With regards to human nature, there are two extreme philosophies. According to a world renowned philosopher, man by nature was born with better qualities such as purity in interactions with others, cultivating positive thoughts, helping nature, generating more constructive ideas and all sort of others to make this world better. When social life began, man became corrupted and his good nature slowly began to disappear or reduced from its optimum level. His mind gave a place for devils to have a small kingdom and its influence at times dominates our thoughts and actions. Based on the other extreme philosophy by nature man is cruel, jealous, self centered, disrespectful of others, angry, more competitive and so on. Once he formed a society and began to live together, he reformed and became somewhat of a better creature in the world.

Where we are at now and what were our original qualities, nobody knows for sure. But one thing is certain. There is a constant battle between the two in our mind and for most of us it is a never ending one. It is a not win-win battle, it is a battle where one wins and the other loses. Once the light is shown, the darkness disappears. When you get enlightened, the ignorance disappears, when moral characteristics prevail, the immoral qualities vanish.

Contd. in page 41...



## MONSOON FEATURE

### Samy Appadurai

It was the morning of December 25th 2008 in Toronto Canada, the slim beautiful rays of the sun entered into the snowy surface, but were unable to penetrate the ground. The temperature was 28 degrees below zero and the entire cosmopolitan city was in a deep sleep underneath a cold blanket. I was heading to the intersection of Finch and Middlefield where thousands of people were queuing inside an old building beside a mighty building under construction. I hardly found a place to park my highlander, and the volunteers dressed in black who were assisting with traffic, kindly took my vehicle to an additional parking lot located almost half a kilometer away. This convenience allowed me to get into the Hindu Ayyappa temple.

I removed my winter boots and joined at the tail end of the long queue to fill ghee into the coconut shell that would be carried in the annual service for Ayyappa by the devotees who would be going on pilgrimage to the main Ayyappa Temple located at Sabarimala, Kerala state, India. In fact over five million devotees from around the world participate in the annual festival, which is the second largest number of people gathering for a single religious service in the world next to the Hajj in Mecca Saudi Arabia. I appreciate the volunteers who were very polite, having a high degree of service in mind and they were well disciplined in directing and assisting such a huge crowd that cold morning. Most of them were very energetic youths, ranging in age from 18-28 years old.

After moving in the queue for almost an hour, I reached the center of the temple where on both sides over four hundred people were in attendance. Most of them were young men and there were a older women. The rest of the devotees were in the range of upper middle age and seniors. All of them were dressed in pitch dark clothes and wore chains filled with beads. I saw a boy who had just turned 12 years of age among the devotees in the pilgrimage group. All those who had been in the pilgrimage group had to fast for 45 days. In this particular case, the fasting is far more rigorous where one does not take normal meals and only reduces the intake of food. This fasting requires that one only consume pure vegetarian foods, possibly excluding foods such as ghee, yogurt, etc. Another major component in the fasting is to abstain from any sexual conduct in the mind, heart and in the body. Lord Ayyappa remained in his incarnation on the Earth as an orphan child found in the Sabari

mountain, left anonymously and found by the king and queen of the of the region who were suffering from not having a child of their own, while enjoying hunting in the forest. He was raised in the palace as a prince and he remained on the earth as a celibate bachelor. These devotees somehow have given much weight on this.

These dietary and behavioral restrictions actually go beyond the fasting. These devotees strive to become masters of themselves and keep away from all sorts of materialistic desires. They also abide in terms of their behavior such as controlling their speech and refrain from using any abusive language, negative thoughts and any offensive acts. This exemplary conduct aims to elevate the souls of the devotees as high as they possibly can and generate more spiritual power within themselves. They are supposed to be honest, spend most of their fasting period in prayer and have positive thoughts. They have to consume simple meals offered to them and sleep on the floor in order to become detached from luxury. The men do not shave their beard nor cut their hair. In conclusion, simple living and high spiritual ideals and acts are the pattern of life during the fasting season.

During this fasting period, these devotees are addressed as "samy" meaning "god". Now you may ask "How come an ordinary human being who is not a holy man is elevated to such a position for a certain number of days?" According to Hinduism every living thing has a soul including plants and animals. The soul has supreme and supernormal powers and a person who generates the optimum level of that power reaches the stage of Enlightenment or oneness with god. Those devotees are controlled and directed not by their mind, feelings, and body but their souls. At that stage, they renounce more of their attachments with this materialistic world and attach themselves with the god who completely detached himself from all sorts of worldly things. That is why they are treated on such a holy level. When you begin to take command of yourself, then the soul commands you. You command the functions of the brain, heart and the mind and lastly the physical body. To command yourself you do not necessarily require a high level of wisdom or physical maturity, what you do need is determination and will power.

I have personally seen parents bowing down to their children who are taking part in the fasting and they given high respect and regard. In eastern culture under normal circumstances, this would not happen and it would not happen even after the fasting is completed because those children would

# A Divine Day with Ayyappa



have resumed their normal lives. Spiritual life supersedes the social status, economic possession, educational achievements, ethnicity, color, race and other societal norms.

I began to watch those young men in the temple. Most of them are known to me in society either with a label of praise and appreciation for their positive contribution, or the inappropriate behavior that has caused them to be isolated and looked down upon. Their realization of the path that they had chosen in the past and their determination to move into the right direction, eagerly making use of every possible opportunity in earning respect and regaining their social status was not the prime motive of their selfless service. In my speeches, I had given them an approval rating so high and I was proud of their exemplary behavior and that they had been able to reach their achievements. I have seen some of them advise and influence the younger ones that they must learn from them and not follow their earlier path. A wise man will learn from others. They have learned that the law enforcement bodies could not enter the area of the core of the mind. This idea has penetrated into the self realization and self enforced rules that have been practiced without any external supervision.

My turn came to pour the ghee into the coconut shell and I moved towards the pilgrims. It was a very proud and emotional moment. I was overpowered by the supernormal power and felt that I am nothing and how could I claim that I could offer anything to Lord Ayyappa. I felt that nothing belonged to me and surrendered to almighty Ayyappa. I took the spoon and picked up some ghee a couple of times and

poured into the small hole made on the top of the coconut. That will be carried to the main temple in Sabarimalai in the western Ghat mountain ranges in India situated in the midst of 18 hills in Kerala state.

My ears got filled with devotional songs from other side of the temple where a group of devotees were singing. Their songs and the sober music directly penetrate into the nervous system and take control of our actions. Some others danced to the tune and crowned their devotional singing. The core of their songs repeatedly directs you to surrender yourself to Ayyappa. At that stage you wonder why you should shoulder the responsibilities of god on your head. It is akin to someone traveling in a train while carrying his luggage on his head. The train will carry and make you travel comfortably, no need to carry such a burden. Life is a journey, and the destination is determined by you. The speed and time of the journey is regulated by you. Leave your worries and headaches to him and get realized and be happy. You may be happier with less possessions and material wealth whereas someone with all sorts of material possessions is miserable.

Almost two decades ago, one fine Sunday morning, I was invited by a group of not more than twenty to a small class room at Woburn Collegiate located at 2222 Ellesmere Road, Scarborough, Ontario Canada, for a very brief prayer meeting of Ayyappa. It was the first time that I had seen a picture of him and watched their way of praying. The prayer was led by the Hindu Reverend Father who migrated from Kerala State, India. Their cordial relationship and openness in the discussion

and sharing of sweet food brought me closer to their non profit organization.

A few years later a couple of devotees who came from Sri Lanka particularly from Analidevi, a small island in the northern province of Sri Lanka and some others from the hinterland of Colombo, the capital city, were interested in having the prayer meetings converted into regular services. I was among them in the initial process of having elaborate daily services. The number of devotees grew quickly and has become a strong religious charitable organization having many services such as its own library, school, fine art classes and counseling. The current temple is one of the mightiest places of worship in Toronto, Canada.

This project and its long

**Samy Appadurai is a renowned broadcast journalist, author, educator and public speaker who makes his home in Toronto.**

standing operation have made significant contributions to the province of Ontario. The foremost is the molding of the youth into constructive and productive pillars of their communities. Their positive acts and helping hands have brought civic responsibly into the spotlight of society.

Secondly those who somehow deviated from the main track in life in the adolescent stage have self confessed to Ayyappa and reformed themselves and are currently citing themselves as role models to the younger generation. I can cite a good example in that these young ones have been strictly fasting during the year end party time and resisted all sort of temptations. I salute them and wish them the very best in their future undertakings.

Ayyappa temple is the center of the promotion of heritage values with the flavor of moral values. The small children who have been attending and the ones who completed their courses in addition to the Public school curriculums have gained the moral values that were a missing link in the modern curriculum but are very essential in maintaining law and order.

One of the very timely and progressive programs that has been advocated and practiced is the mutual understanding and respect of other religions and working for the betterment of humanity irrespective of their faith. Most of the devotees who go on to pilgrimage to Saaremaa in the millions yearly, visit a Muslim mosque and have joint performances.

Contd. in page 41...

# SPIRITUALITY WITHOUT RELIGIOUS BORDERS

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Both cannot survive together at the same time. Dr. Martin Luther King emphasized love in a very novel way by saying that if someone hates you, you should love him, as it was said in the Bible "when someone slaps you on one cheek, you should turn the other cheek". Dr. King said that when someone hates you and in return if you hate him, you are adding darkness to the darkness that is already in existence, instead you throw light by loving him. He inherited such values from Mahatma Gandhi of India.

I admire the approach of the Oneness Movement organization in that it is giving a heavy importance on generating positive energy within ourselves. Think good of and for others, do not hate others, have concern for the well being of others. It is a very scientific philosophy and related to the notion that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. Once you throw a ball of destruction at others, it will come back to you at the same speed, sooner or later. Sathya Sai Baba, a living saint in India with devotees all around the world, advocates for love by saying love all, serve all and hate none. Lord Buddha

looked at the cause of human problems and said it was due to the multiplicity of desires. Too many desires are the cause of suffering and the reduction of desires will ease suffering. Islam promotes the brotherhood of mankind and pours affection and love to them. The essence of all these religions is one, though the emphasis may differ slightly. The promotion of a religion by condemning others and converting from one to another by force has to be condemned. This behavior can be channeled into more valuable resources and in a more positive and constructive manner to benefit other fellow human beings. Unfortunately what happens is that they fight one another and forget the fundamental philosophy of religious rituals and beliefs. These values and rituals thus become only ceremonial exercises.

There is a new trend these days spreading faster than ever before. Youngsters around the world, particularly in the advanced world have a high faith in spirituality but not religion and have become detached from religious boundaries. They are not atheists or believe like Karl Max

that materialism is the ultimate goal of life and nothing more than that. They believe that all religions are under one umbrella and that materialism is the means of reaching everlasting happiness although how to achieve this, from where, when and how are dealt with differently in some ways and similar in others.

In the olden days particularly during the pre civilization era, people worshiped thunder, lightning, fire and so on due to fear. Later one it turned into expressing grace, gratitude and love. In some cases, religion brought spirituality and in others spirituality brought religion and in many cases both are separate elements. Some of these youngsters are very well behaved ones, spiritually inclined but not very practicing religious persons. They do not hate religion but are not engaged in religious activities and this is not required to be a good citizen. Some think that we are not for the religion but the religion is for us and some religious practices are comfortable for them.

I do not want to get into the definition of what is religion and what is spirituality and if they are two sides of the same coin or two

separate identities, but to expose the naked truth and be down to earth in this aspect. Some may think spirituality without religion is baseless and some others believe that there is a super normal power in existence but not in the form that mainstream religions portray in the forms of idols or a formless god.

I hear from all corners when many people express their dissatisfaction of religious beliefs when they witness many people killed by natural calamities such as drought, tsunami and so on and when justice is denied and innocent people are killed and massacred. They ask where is god and what has he been doing. They ask if god has any mercy on them or is he blind and so on.

There are two schools of thought in the religious institutions we have today. One school of thought says that all these destructive activities are the result of active involvement by Satan and the second one is that birth is a continuous process until the soul gets completed purified. The soul will undergo many rebirths and carry the balance of the good actions minus the bad ones into the next birth. This process is called karma; you harvest what you have planted in the previous birth in addition to what

you have been doing now.

If we look at human beings without the boundaries of any religion, we can see the commonality of certain fundamental beliefs irrespective of culture. These can be summarized as follows:

1. Basic human needs from the primitive man to the civilized man have not undergone much change and are common to everyone.

2. The goal of life is to achieve eternal happiness.

3. Good and bad qualities exist in all of us and the battle between the two is going on in our minds.

We all are searching for everlasting solutions but have yet to experience them.

We are living in two worlds, the spiritual and material.

And finally, we all have the same nature, our goals are identical and we belong to the same human race. Why not work together as members of the same family?

I thank the Oneness group who organized this seminar and gave the liberty while doing the translation of the speech which brought these thoughts into my mind.

## Speech by Ken Kirupa

Contd. from page 36

I shall endeavor to do this with the assistance, cooperation, and commitment of each and every one of you.

Without any doubt, our trade shows and awards gala night's at prestigious venues with distinguished guest speakers elevated the status of the Tamil business community. I will ensure that the celebration of Tamil businesspersons continues to be a successful event. Furthermore, I wish to continue our business labs, walkathons, golf tournaments, and the all important networking events.

All of this will only be possible if every chamber member is united in this cause. We must remember that this is a business chamber. And that includes EVERY Tamil businessperson. Whether you are a banker or Lawyer, plumber or Realtor, grocery store owner or video store owner, accountant or doctor, financial or insurance advisor, printer or restaurant owner this chamber is for you. Furthermore, this cham-

ber is for operations of all sizes. Whether your businesses revenue is \$ 5000 or \$500,000, this chamber is for you. Moreover, we always welcome new members and wish that they will also take an active role in shaping the future of the chamber. Whether you were present during the formation of the chamber or merely joined today, this chamber is for you.

I know life can be very busy for businesspeople like you. According to Victoria Labalme, a motivational speaker, we wake up and run on a conveyor belt and are very busy through the whole day - attending meetings, conference calls, seminars -webinars, checking your blackberry, sending emails receiving g-mails, fedexing, faxing, googling, downloading, uploading.... don't forget facebooking and twitter-tweeting! I am sure almost all of you can relate to this. And it is a sad reality that we cannot have 48 hours in a day. So to all my friends, I wish to express my gratitude for taking your time to attend this meeting and for the good wishes so many of you have sent to me.

If we remain united, we will not only elevate the business

community, but we will also elevate the Tamil community in general. None of this, however, would be possible without the help of our main sponsors - RBC, TD, and Scotiabank. Their contribution has made a world of a difference to the accomplishments of this chamber. I expect their continued support and participation.

Just as sponsorship is crucial, I believe that the expansion of the organization is also a crucial element for its success. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome any new ideas to expand the membership of the chamber.

Finally, I would like to give a warm welcome to our new board. I know they'll make a significant contribution to all of the chamber's undertakings this coming year. I would like to personally thank each and every one of them for agreeing to be a board member this term.

Moreover, I would like to thank you, once again, for choosing me as your President for this year. I look forward to working with the members and bringing this organization to new heights.

See you all at the Golf Tournament!!!

Chamber forward.

During this difficult time, I am not going to stand here and suggest that we made the right decision - in fact - only history can judge us on this. What we did was ensure that we shared the grief of our community, and ensured that the credibility of our organization was kept in tact, while ensuring that we can move forward.

And move forward we will. The Canadian Tamils Chamber of Commerce is one of a handful of organizations with the credibility and vision to lead this community. I am confident that the new team will make

us proud and I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the existing board for their support and contribution. I wish to thank the constant support of Krishni our Administrator. I could not have carried out the past two years without the support of Logan - our past President - and our Rock. Thank you Logan.

I wish to close by thanking all the sponsors, advisory board members, past presidents and our members for your support and understanding.

I wish to pledge my fullest support to the new board. Thank you.

## A Divine Day with Ayyappa

Pg 40 contd...

The function of filling the coconuts with holy ghee and one of the biggest fasting events is always observed on Christmas day.

Ayyappa Temple has generated full time and part time employment for Canadians in various capacities and generates revenue for the government. The focus of future employment has a very broad scope.

Ayyappa Temple is a source of expansion of flourishing business and a variety of enterprises. Ayyappa Temple being a fast growing temple, having a high volume of devotees from the West Indies and South East Asia is obtaining a better perspective for new business plans and models. I am very certain that the newly constructed temple with all of its modern facilities and larger space will require more services in terms of temple supplies, staff and volunteers.

Ayyappa Temple plans to have a recreation centre built for the use of the seniors as the one of their long term projects. Catering to the Seniors is one of the main objectives of the temple. Seniors from all corners feel that they are not being adequately taken care of in the community. Although the Federal and Provincial governments have made several attempts to rectify this situation, it also an obligation of the non-profit sector to supplement the government's efforts thus far. Ayyappa Temple is not keeping itself isolated from the mainstream. The proposed

Seniors Centre will be open year round and cater to their various needs.

We should not undervalue the importance of children. In fact, the image of Lord Ayyappa to many of his devotees is as a young child, full of energy, beauty, love and spirit. Most of the children who accompany their elders to their place of worship do not get entertained according to their needs. They get bored easily and this can cause disruptions. Of course, these days children are very much engaged in spending their leisure time in playing video games, chatting with friends on the phone, working on computers and reading books. The temple has improvised and plans to have a child minding centre where the elders can leave their children in a supervised environment and engage in their devotions without worry. Children will be engaged in the child minding centre playing games, listening to devotional songs and other age appropriate activities.

Ayyappa Temple is unique in that it appeals to all levels of society, from children to seniors. The temple, its staff and devotees are actively engaged in the community outside the temple grounds rather than confining themselves to their own people. They make an effort to reach out to others, no matter what their culture or faith may be. That is why this temple is so mighty.

I returned home at about 10 pm with great pleasure.

## Speech made by Gary Anandasangaree - from Pg 36

Virtually every activity we planned had to be reorganized or changed to ensure that we were sensitive to the hurt of our members. At the same time, we had to ensure that while we share the pain of those individuals at the camps, we did not step into the political sphere. As a result, we ended postponing many events, and at one point, we decided that we have to move on and as a result we called for an early AGM in order that a new board can come forward take the



## Book Release Function

Release of 3 Books written by Prof. E. Balasundaram organized by Thamilar Senthamarai

### Venue:

Atlanta Party Hall  
1240 Ellesmere Road  
(Midland & Ellesmere)

### Date:

Saturday, September 19, 2009  
at 5.00 p.m.

The books are written for the benefit and development of the kids. This is an important function for every parent and all are invited by the Author and Organizers.

## Enjoy your life in oneness

The World Oneness Center was built as a part of the vision of Sri Amma and Sri Bhagavan who hold the passion and intent to transform humanity from a state of division to one of Oneness. A state of being where humanity can discover the love that exists in each moment and feel connected to everyone and everything. This is being achieved by the Phenomenon of the Oneness Blessing.

To take part in what will be a remarkable and transformative day in your life with His Gracious Nalenthiranji. This could be the answer to what you may have been searching for a very long time. You cannot easily learn your way out of suffering, you need to 'experience' journey out itself. By way of the Oneness process, many have healed relationships, redefined their purpose, experienced better physical and mental health, overcome financial turmoil and established a deeper connection to their own faith.

To understand what is Oneness is and to enjoy the happiness when you experience your life in oneness please enroll yourself in the following seminar. Please participate with your family and experience through filled with blessing, happiness and long lasting peace.

**Date: September 12, 2009 Saturday**

**Venue: Metropolitan Centre, 3840 Finch Avenue  
Scarborough Ontario**

Since limited seating are available please register in advance to avoid disappointment.

**Please call: 416 855 4544 / 647 895 1080 /  
416 834 6815 / 416 855 3577**

## Workshop on Job Search

**Date: September 24, 2009 (Thursday)**

**Time: 6:30 p.m-8:00 pm**

**Content: Job Search Strategies,**

Hidden Job Resources and how to look for a job?

Place: Morningside Library

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Toronto, ON. M1E 2S8

**Fee: Free**

All are welcome

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**(Urdu) Library Settlement Worker at**

**416-707-8259**

**Morningside Library at 416-396-8881**

Thank you

Media Contact:

**Zarmeena Khan: 416-707 8259**

## An Invitation

for the Official Opening of the Centre for War Victims and Human Rights (CWVHR)

The Board of Directors and the Members of CWVHR are glad to invite you for the opening of our Centre for War Crimes and Human Rights.

The inaugural function will take place at  
705 Progress Avenue, Unit 106 on  
Saturday, 12th September 2009, at 10.30 a.m.

The Centre for War Victims and Human Rights is established to protect War Victims and promote Human Rights. Our initiative began with documentation of Human Rights Violations of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

We have launched this project in Toronto as well as in other cities in Canada. Now it has been extended globally and more than 10 countries have joined our initiative. We will also share with you our future activities of the CWVHR.

Your presence will encourage us and enhance our commitment towards the realization of a noble cause in order to seek Justice and Peace to our sisters and brothers.

Thank you,  
The Welcoming Committee of CWVHR

## The Scarborough Hospital Formally Opens West Wing at General Campus

The Scarborough Hospital 's state-of-the-art \$72 million West Wing houses a new Emergency Department, Critical Care Centre and Diagnostic Imaging. Three photo opportunities include the unveiling of a commemorative plaque, the official opening and a cake-cutting ceremony.

The Honourable David Caplan will unveil the commemorative plaque and officially open the West Wing. Scarborough Centre MPP Brad Duguid will make a funding announcement.

**Wednesday, September 9, 2009**  
**Multicultural entertainment:**

1:30 p.m., auditorium

**Plaque unveiling:**

2:00 p.m., West Wing hallway next to the Worship Centre

**Official opening:**

2:10 p.m., Auditorium

**Cake-cutting ceremony:**  
Auditorium, 2:40 p.m.

The Scarborough Hospital, General campus, West Wing, 3050 Lawrence Avenue East, Scarborough, ON

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 treatment 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.

## AMAZING RESEARCH BOOK ON CANADA "CANADA THE MEAT OF THE WORLD SANDWICH"

By

**SAMY APPADURAI**

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Launching in Canada at 5.30 pm on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> Sept 09,  
Eastown banquet hall, 2648 Eglinton Ave. East Scarborough

## NEW LOOK ON THE HORIZON FOR TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL

Town seeks public input in development of new brand to better reflect community

Town of Richmond Hill is developing a new brand and is inviting residents to participate in the process.

"Richmond Hill is a dynamic community with a rich history and an exciting future," said Mayor Dave Barrow.

The Town has evolved into a unique community with exciting potential and it is time these changes were reflected in a new visual identity (logo) that can showcase Richmond Hill to residents and other cities, provinces and countries.

"The Town's current logo symbolizes more than 130 years of history," added Mayor Barrow. "But as we move forward, coming out of our recently approved Strategic Plan

and continuing our work on developing a new Official Plan, we find ourselves looking towards our future - who we are, and what we want to be. Our brand and logo should reflect that to everyone who sees it."

Recommendations from the Town-wide Communication Audit suggested that the Town's visual identifier should be updated to portray the current community. This sentiment was echoed by the public when residents and businesses alike commented on the need to develop a consistent image for the Town during the development of the Strategic Plan via People Plan Richmond Hill.

The new brand will better reflect the community and to get started with developing it, the Town has created a brief online survey on the Town's Website at [hill.ca. The public is invited to participate before September 16.](http://www.richmond-</a></p>
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"This is one of many opportunities that the public will have to be involved in the development of the new brand," said Carol Moore, Manager of Communication Services.

"In Richmond Hill, we truly value the community's opinion and encourage them to participate in helping us develop our new brand," said Mayor Barrow. "I hope that everyone will invite their friends and family to fill in the survey and have their say!"

Those without computer access and/or would like to complete a hard copy of the survey, can contact Communication Services at (905) 771-2418 for a mail-in copy. The new brand and logo are expected to be considered by Council in late January 2010.



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# Ronald McDonald® visit Rouge Valley Centenary Patient meet-and-greet and showcasing of life-saving donation



Laughter is the best medicine, and Ronald McDonald was on call at Rouge Valley Centenary (RVC) hospital campus. He helped cheer to the young patients in the Paediatrics Department and showcased McDonald's recent donation to the Emergency Department.

McDonald's Canada has been a long-time supporter of Rouge Valley Health System. They provided funding for new hostel rooms in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at RVC's now-open Birthing and Newborn Centre and, earlier this year, 23 Scarborough-area McDonald's restaurants fundraised for a portable ultrasound machine for RVC's Emergency Department with their "Save Time, Save Lives" campaign.

"At McDonald's, it is our ultimate goal to help better the lives of children in our community," said Dale Bartlett, Owner/Operator who spearheaded the 'Save Time, Save Lives' campaign. "We're extremely proud to have partnered with Rouge Valley to help support the work they do to help our community, especially children."

Attendees: Ronald McDonald, Dr. K.C. Moran, front-line

Emergency staff, and McDonald's Owner/Operators Dale Bartlett, Terri Toms, Terry Brazill, Deborah Feaver and John Pang

### About Rouge Valley Health System Foundation

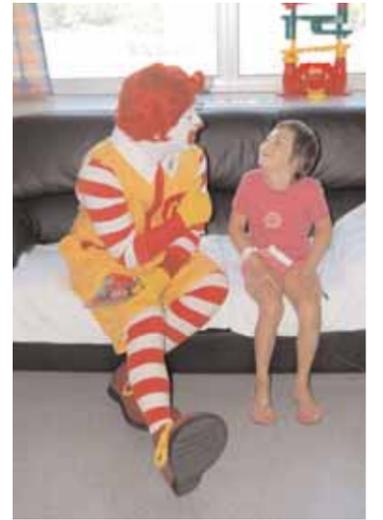
The Rouge Valley Health System Foundation's mission is to partner with the community to invest in superior healthcare at Rouge Valley Health System. The Foundation raises funds to support the purchase of leading-edge medical equipment and support major capital expansion projects.

### About McDonald's Canada

McDonald's is the leading foodservice company in the world. More than 70 per cent of McDonald's Canadian restaurants are locally owned and operated by independent entrepreneurs. For more information about McDonald's Canada, visit the company's website at [www.mcdonalds.ca](http://www.mcdonalds.ca).

Contact: Kerry McLeish, Communications Officer  
(416) 281-7265 or (905) 683-2320 x1227

[kmcleish@rougevalley.ca](mailto:kmcleish@rougevalley.ca)  
Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering, 580 Harwood Avenue, Ajax, Rouge Valley Centenary, 2867 Ellesmere Road, Toronto  
[www.rougevalley.ca/rvhsf](http://www.rougevalley.ca/rvhsf)



# HNB Opens Delma Exchange office in Canada for Money Remittances & Transfers

By Siva Sivapragasam

Hatton National Bank, a premier and prestigious commercial Bank in Sri Lanka recently opened up an office in Scarborough named Delma Exchange Canada to facilitate money remittances and transfers from Canada to Sri Lanka and other countries.

Mr. Rajendra Theagarajah, HNB's CEO and Managing Director was personally present from Colombo to oversee the opening and the commencement of the commercial operations. Speaking to press persons at the opening, Mr. Theagarajah outlined in detail the working operations of the remittances from Canada to Sri Lanka. He explained that in view of the large population of persons



Picture shows Left to Right - Ms. Beatrice Kamaleeni Arnold (Independent Non-Executive Director, Delma Exchange Canada), Mr. Abhaya Suwandarathne (Independent Non Executive Director, Delma Exchange Canada), Mr. Rajendra Theagarajah (MD/CEO-Hatton National Bank, Sri Lanka), Ms. Tharini Mahesan, President, Delma Exchange Canada (Picture Courtesy: Mahesh Abeyawardene)

of Sri Lankan origin in Canada, the country is a vital and important corridor for inward remittances to Sri Lanka. The hallmark of Delma Exchange is utmost convenience at an affordable cost to the customer. A customer will have to download an application form from the office website ([www.delmaexchangeCanada.com](http://www.delmaexchangeCanada.com)) after which he will be given a loyalty card with a unique customer ID. After this, the customer can initiate a remittance by instructing his Canadian Bank to transfer the required sum to the Designated Bank Account of Delma Exchange. Delma will pick up the remittance message online and input the remittance instructions to either credit the customer's bank account in Sri Lanka or pay cash on production of ID by a named beneficiary. The service is available not only to account holders of HNB but to all cus-

tomers of any licensed commercial Bank in Sri Lanka.

Ms. Tharini Mahesan, an experienced Banker, will serve as the President of Delma Exchange, Canada.

She explained that Delma Exchange's own procedures supported by the strong backing and infrastructure of HNB would ensure that Best in Class practices would be maintained in the commercial operations of the Remittances. Ms. Beatrice Kamaleeni Arnold, a veteran real estate professional and Abhaya Suwandarathne, a senior Chartered Accountant will serve as Non-Executive Directors. The office of Delma Exchange Canada is located at suite 122, 1200 Markham Road, Scarborough and the contact telephone number for any further details is 416 431 2020.

# Monsoon Kids Corner

## Color Me Competition - 18

Winner for August 2009

Color Me Competition - 18

Shahla Lafeer

Toronto

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September 25, 2009

Entries have to be made on original paper, photo copies not accepted.

The Winner will be selected and posted in the October issue.

Please mail to:

Monsoon Journal

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Please Note:

Prize is sponsored by

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Only one winner will be

selected.

## Color me Competition - 19



## Entry Form: September 2009

Name: .....

Address: .....

Tel No:..... E-Mail: .....

# Thermal Power

Chairing a meeting of the Planning Commission the Prime Minister of India said: "We import over 70% of our petroleum energy needs and are also moving to a deficit position in coal. Rational energy policies are also critical for rational responses to the threat of climate change." The Prime Minister asked the Commission to make a fresh assessment of the energy scenario. The Prime Minister's concern with climate change is wholly welcome. But we have to be careful that our self-restraint in reducing carbon emissions is not undone by increased emissions by the rich countries.

The three main sources of energy are thermal, nuclear and hydropower. All three are not sustainable. Burning of coal in thermal plants leads to emissions of carbon dioxide gas which is contributing to global warming. India has large reserves of coal but the quality is poor. Our coal contains large amounts of sulphur and other non-carbon contents. These materials get burnt along with the carbon in the coal. This leads to emission of sulphur dioxide which is more harmful than carbon dioxide. Thus increased generation of thermal power is not sustainable. We have few reserves of uranium that can be used for the generation of nuclear power. We have to import uranium which threatens our economic sovereignty. Moreover, nuclear power has problems of disposal of radioactive wastes. Hydropower has many serious environmental impacts. The silt of the rivers is getting trapped in reservoirs like Tehri and leading to erosion of our coasts. The leaves and other organic material ferment in the bed of reservoirs and generates poisonous methane gas. Most importantly hydropower projects disturb the free flow of the rivers whom we worship. They destroy our cultural heritage. It is like placing a broken earthen pot in the pooja instead of the kalash. None of the three main sources of energy are, therefore, sustainable.

The true solution of this problem

is to reduce the consumption of energy. We can stop the use of air-conditioners and use CFL lamps instead of bulbs. We can also develop more solar power which has lesser environmental effects. But it is unlikely that such measures can bridge the gap between demand and supply of power. The Government is also less interested in such measures because there are few opportunities to give out big contracts here. Therefore, we have no alternative but to choose between the three sources of power to meet our immediate requirements-howsoever harmful they may be.

We can examine who bears the costs of thermal, nuclear and hydro power to make such an assessment. Technology expert Brad Templeton provides an interesting perspective on this in his blog titled 'Moral choice on nuclear vs. coal'. Arguing against nuclear power, he says: "What is done by the CO2 we emit is done to the whole world. While the USA and developed world produce most of the CO2 emissions, they will suffer a minority of the damage. The problems of nuclear power, however, largely remain within the country. If there is a nuclear waste problem, it's our problem. If there is a meltdown, it's our land that is ruined, our people killed. Both choices, nuclear and fossil have predicted risks. But very different sets of people pay the price." The argument is that costs of thermal power are borne substantially by rest of the world while those of nuclear power are borne by ourselves, therefore, let us use more coal. The same logic applies to hydropower. The environmental and cultural costs of this are borne within country. Nuclear power has one additional disadvantage for us. We become dependent on imports of uranium and that hits at our economic sovereignty. Therefore, if we opt for thermal power the consequences will be borne by the whole world while if we opt for nuclear or hydro power the costs will be borne by us.

We face a moral hazard. We have

to increase our consumption of power because rest of the world is not willing to reduce their energy consumption. If we unilaterally reduce our consumption then we will fall behind in the international markets. Energy consumption is for us a compulsion arising from refusal of other countries to move to a high-price low-consumption regime. Therefore, the costs of high energy consumption should also be borne by all countries together.

Ideally we should practice restraint and not follow others in their wrong action. But this can be counterproductive. The problem is explained in economics as 'grazing dilemma'. There is a common grazing land in the village. If all villagers agree not to graze for 15 days, the grass will grow and everyone will have more grass. But what to do when some do not follow the rule? If I do not graze while others do, then I am left much worse off. I loose even the small grazing that I was getting previously. The rule breakers get my share of the grazing. Thus, it is best for me not to abide by

the rule if others are not likely to abide by it. The same logic applies to thermal power. If all countries reduce the use of coal and oil then we should follow. But if other countries increase the use of coal and we exercise self-restraint; then we will suffer from the global warming inflicted by other countries' use of coal and also bear the local environmental and political costs of nuclear and hydro power.

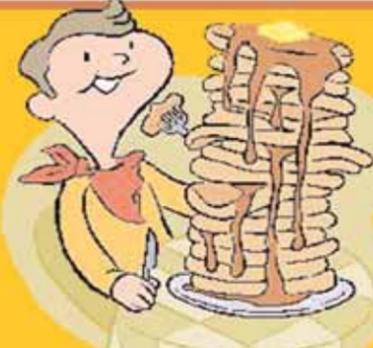
Global consumption of coal is increasing rapidly. The World Energy Outlook tells us that use of coal is expected to rise by over 60% from 2006 to 2030. Coal's share in global electricity generation is set to increase from 41% to 44% in this period. Clean energy activist Steve Kretzmann says the World Bank Group lending to coal, oil and gas is up 94% from 2007 but lending to coal has increased an 'astonishing' 256% in the last year. These stats indicate that the world is not likely to reduce its consumption of coal in the near future. In consequence, global warming will continue we will be affected by this irrespective

of our use of coal. We will be doubly hit if we opt for nuclear and hydro power. It seems to me we should opt for coal till such time that there is a reliable and verifiable global consensus against use of that source.

Rich countries are weaving a web around us. They are asking us to reduce use of coal in order to contain global warming. But they are themselves continuing with their consumption of coal and oil. We will be affected by the global warming that will take place anyways. Additionally we will become dependent upon them for imports of uranium. We will also loose our spiritual and cultural mettle due to killing of our rivers. The Prime Minister should not walk into this trap. We should develop our coal resources till there is a credible global consensus to reduce the same.

**Kanayalal Raina**

(Brampton based consultant who provides technology, tools, services to help business to start, grow and succeed. He can be contacted Email: klsraina@rogers.com)



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# "Dry bones, can they live again?"



## A poignant stage play with a difference

**Review**

**By: Raymond Rajabalan**

A genuine desire to serve the needs of our brothers and sisters languishing in the refugee camps in Vavuniya, deprived of even the basic needs comes from deep down from the heart as was clearly depicted in the poignant display of human feelings in this moving dramatic presentation.

Yes, it was a summer night with a difference where unbridled emotions of compassion were spontaneously let loose both on the stage and among the spectators.

"Dry bones, can they live again", was a real life drama depicting the plight of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) caught in the middle during the war in Wanni. The drama staged recently by Scarborough based Pentecostal church Miracle Family Temple (MFT) represented by Miracle Family Care, a registered Non Governmental Organization

(NGO), offered a vivid presentation of situation prevailing in the camps in Vavuniya. The stage play brought out tears in the eyes of each and every one in the auditorium all of whom were effectively spell bound and glued to their seats throughout the two hour play.

This successful production is a reminder of everything a stage play material should include: dedicated actors, excellent sound system, well coordinated rapid change of scenes that seamlessly blended with the general sequence of events etc. The list of the features that contributed to the great success of this drama is nearly as long as the many actors all of whom effectively intertwined themselves with their character.

There were many incidents that touched the hearts of every one.

"The agony of a young girl trapped within the camp sur-

rounded by barbed wire expressing her pent up emotions on seeing her fiancé helplessly waiting our side the camp under the watchful eyes of the troops, was heart wrenching.

"The dedicated principal of Vavuniya Maha Vidyalayam who had high dreams of guiding the students for a bright future played a very prominent role breaking down helplessly whenever there were tragedies both within the school premises and within the general community was very touching.

The opening scene was an indication that an exceptionally promising stage program was about to be presented. The peaceful setting of the rural home in that scene never gave a hint as to the tragedy that was to unfold.

The typical village custom of arranged marriage followed by the group dancing by the fiends of a sweetly innocent young girl and her friends was a real treat to

watch. The pleasant atmosphere was suddenly shattered by the successive turn of horrific events in Wanni. It was effectively portrayed by the deafening sound of aerial attacks and carpet bombing that resulted in serious loss of lives. Thunder rolled, lightning flashed and the scene appeared so realistic that many in the audience who never experienced such horror froze with fear as evidenced by the uncharacteristic silence that pervaded the hall.

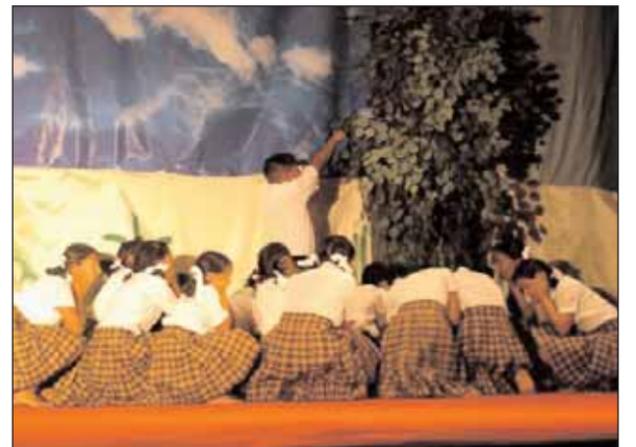
The scene of war affected civilians crossing of Nanthikadal lagoon was exceptionally moving and the effective portrayal of the immense suffering of the affected civilians was enough to melt even the most stone hearted.

The church Pastor and his wife had just returned from Sri Lanka after providing various forms of assistance to the displaced civilians. Having had first hand experience of the sufferings of the affected civilians both of

them standing among the refugees in a camp in the final scene and describing their experience caused tears flowing from those present in the hall.

Muffled cries and silent sobs from the audience was an effective testimony to the overall success of the effective portrayal of the recent colossal human tragedy. The staging of this of play without anyone in the audience moving from their seat was an effective proof of the roaring success of this effective portrayal of a great human tragedy.

High hopes of the producers of the play was realized, the underlying message passed across the local population and the overall effort was well worth. This stage play gave a clear indication that the hardships of the displaced people are only temporary and there will be relief for them in the near future with our generous contributions and dedicated efforts.



## EMPOWERING WOMAN SEMINAR



Budo Martial Arts Academy along with Get Fit Toronto organized a Free seminar called Empowering Woman on the 22nd of August 2009 at the Imperial Event Centre located at 3021 Markham Road, unit 54, Scarborough, Ontario.

More than 15 woman took part in this seminar in which 30 minutes of self defense techniques were taught by Sensei Sriram Rangan of Budo Martial Arts Academy. Sensei Sriram said that Karate is not about Attacking, Karate is not even about defending, but karate is about Preventing and by learning to defend oneself, one is confident enough to prevent an attack.

Also a 30 minutes of Yoga was taught by Vaishali Thorat who also spoke about the value of yoga, stretching and balancing

ones mind and specially the importance of yoga for today's busy woman.

After the yoga 35 minutes of Nithya Dhyana was done, Nithya Dhyana is a guided meditation taught by the young enlighten master Parmahansa Nithyananda all over the world. A powerful meditation technique that not only breaks the patterns of the mind but also teaches you to unclutch from your thoughts and attain peace with in.

Also laughing meditation was conducted by Mr. Previn Sharma of Metro Learning Centre followed by an introduction to skin care by Mrs. Shilpa from Herbal Mystique from Brampton. The participants enjoyed this two hour seminar organized by Budo Martial Arts Academy and Get Fit Toronto.

## Sri Lanka micromanages aid, bullies aid deliverers, says UK newspaper

With the economy undermined by "high military spending, collapsed tourism revenues, disrupted agriculture and reduced trade," and also being "dependent on outside aid in its efforts to deal with the human consequences of the war," Sri Lanka however is acting in ways hindering aid delivery to internally displaced persons, The Guardian UK said in an editorial on Sep 9th.

The paper said "Colombo is still severely restricting access to the north, particularly to the area of the final battles, and to the camps where an estimated 280,000 people displaced by the fighting are detained".

It added that "it is time that the donor nations and the agencies formed a united front to resist this unreasonable and ungrateful attitude."

Meantime, the British High Commission in Colombo on Sep 9th reportedly refused visas to outgoing Sri Lanka Foreign Secretary Palitha Kohona.

Dr. Palitha Kohona was seeking a visa as he was New York bound to assume duties as Sri



Dr. Palitha Kohona

Lanka's Ambassador of United Nations.

Dr Kohona is a dual Australian-Sri Lankan citizen who worked as an Australian diplomat in Geneva and Canberra, as well as for the UN, before accepting a ministerial post with the Sri Lankan government.

Sydney University's Centre of Peace and Conflict Studies director Jake Lynch said recent statements by Dr Kohona that no victor

ever faced war crimes charges rendered him "an entirely inappropriate candidate to represent a UN member state".

"For Kohona to be seemingly boasting that he and his colleagues will not face war crimes charges and then be sent straight to the UN is an indication of the contempt the Rajapakse government has for the UN and its authority," he said.



# GEMS: Purposes and Influence on Human Life

**Prof. Saran Ghai**

Gems and Jewels have always been a preferred choice of those who can afford it and a need for those who believe in the impacts of these stones on their fate. From times immemorial the gems and jewels were worn in person as an expression of make-up or ornamentation and as a display of wealth. The Ayurveda has in its tenets the subject such as the use of gems and jewels in human physiology and other relevant theories which connect human psychology with the impact of stones.

Even these stones are good for the health and for thousands of years the Ayurvedacharyas have used the gems in forms of ashes, powders and for the chemical trials in treating human ailments.

The intrinsic influence of the gems which relates to the theory of science of the rays, is a subject of interest of the astrologers. Varahmihira had acknowledged the supra-sensitive or miraculous entity of the gems and jewels, apart from the ornamental beauty and utility of the precious stones. Ratnapareekshadhhyaya says, "If the kings wear favourable gems and jewels on person, they become benefited, if they wear the unfavourable ones, they get bad results in their life and times." It is very important for an astrologer to understand which gem has what influence on the human body. That is why it is said that before putting on a gem or a jewel, one must get that adequately tested by the gemologists. Purity of a gem is the most essential part and one has to understand it. It is true that the real and faultless gems are quite expensive but there is no use wearing the faulted ones. A good stone can give you a new life but a bad stone may bring curse in your life too.

There are unique elemental powers concealed in the gems. There is no reason why they should not be denoted as divine powers. This theory is accepted universally. About the ambers, it



is said that the jewels have been made of the tear-drops of a Greek God. According to the popular belief in the Western world, the amber cures one of rheumatism. The Germans believe, and they do so: they hang around the garland of amber on the necks of the infants, so that their teeth might come out without much trouble and pain. The Turkish people fix a piece of amber in the hubble-bubble, dogged by an age old belief that the presence of the jewel would destroy all the germs and no disease would spread. The Greeks think if wine is poured into the cups made of amethyst, one does not get drunk after drinking that.

Romans believe that a talisman having coral pieces is considered very auspicious to quell the bad spells of evil look. They would also hang chains made of ancient coral pieces from the cradle of the infants to protect them from all evil effects.

China was the pioneer in making rings on the belief that they cure the diseases. They used to stud tiny conch or oyster shells in those rings and they believed, if one wears them according to the tenets of the rituals, he becomes cured of all aches like stomach

ache, headache, worms and the like. Indians who had always been and are the strongest believers of the good impact of gems on the human body and fate, lockets made of silver and studded with pearls hung from the necks of the children to save them from any bad effects in the element.

The Greeks still believe, if women wear the blue sapphires, no sense of immortality would pollute their mind nor can any fear of the supernatural images can trouble them. The Pope Innocent III circulated an order asking all the priests to wear blue sapphire, so that morality can be strengthened.

There is a strong belief that a turquoise gifted to a friend or a lover turns his or her life into one of happiness and good luck. There are so many of such instances when a gem changed the life of a person.

It proves that since ages people knew about the usefulness and impact of gems and jewels on the human life. Till this modern age the belief is as strong as in the past. These stones are also known as lucky stones only because of their good impact on the life of the human being.



(Prof. Saran Ghai is an Author, Editor and Publisher of a number of Books, Magazines and Newspapers. He is a Palm Reader and a Numerologist too. To book appointment to know about your present and future, Love, Marriage, Business and other problems, make an appointment on phone.

Prof. Ghai publishes a monthly magazine titled "Superior Star" covering Meditation, Wellness, Naturopathy, Yoga, Palmistry, Astrology, Numerology, Astronomy, Reiki and many other alike subjects. To Subscribe Superior just for \$20 per year, please e-mail - [superiormonthly@yahoo.ca](mailto:superiormonthly@yahoo.ca).

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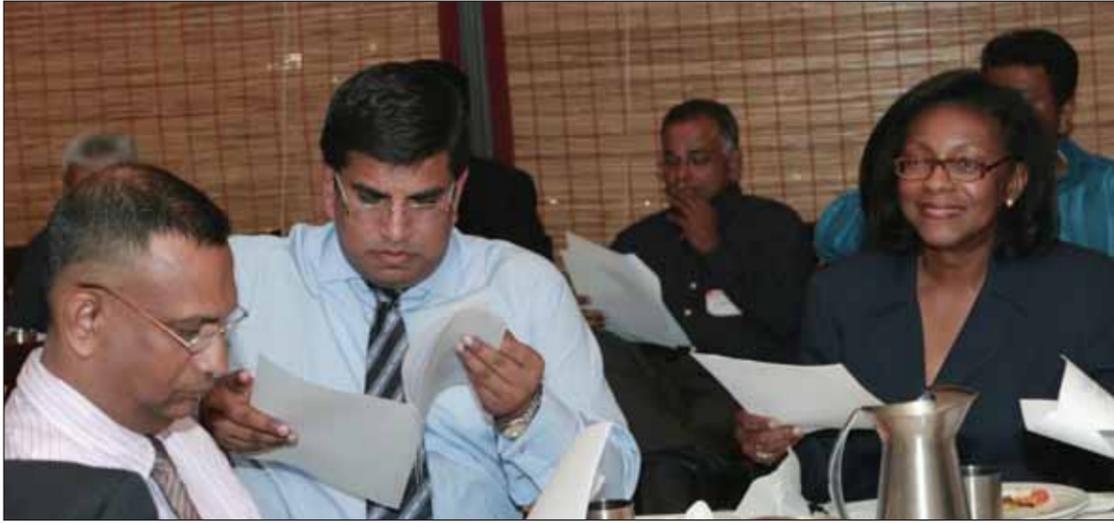
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Christine Williams, District Vice President, Scotiabank going through the reports at right, Mano Thillainathan, Branch Manager, Scotiabank Scarborough Centre Branch & CTCC's Past President at left, Gnana Gnanachandran, Financial Planner & CTCC's Past President at the back

More information and photos at pages 36 & 41



Imtiaz Seyid, Vice President, South Asian Markets, RBC making a comment, (L-R) Gary Anandasangaree, Lawyer & CTCC's President for the last two years, Imtiaz Seyid, David Bastiampillai, Account Manager, RBC and Mohan Sundaramohan, Branch Manager, RBC Morningside & Milner Branch & CTCC's Past President

More information and photos at pages 36 & 41

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