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# Monsoon Journal

A parfait media publication

VOL 3

ISSUE 5

OCTOBER 2008

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## Canada Votes - October 14th, 2008 Fighting to a Finish

By Siva Sivapragasam

Promises have been made..  
Pledges have been given..  
Performances have been told...

The plea for Mr. & Mrs. Citizen Canada's vote to win power in Parliament Hill will end in a few days when the booming campaign guns go silent. The fight to finish the win will end by Oct.14.

Canada goes to the hustings before the scheduled date for want of a majority in Parliament. During the last few weeks, the voters have had the opportunity to see, hear and read what the Leaders and candidates have to say what they will do and what they will achieve if elected to power.

Among different types of Government, with it's demerits, Democracy is still the best time tested system to feel the pulse of a nation as to who should govern them. It is a form of Government, as Abraham Lincoln put it "for the people, to the people and by the people". Under Democracy the people are given an opportunity once every four or five years to decide who should be the custodian of their country for a specific period, and the chance to judge their performances during this time. If the chosen party does well, they are given a further opportunity to govern, and if they don't, they are sent home. When a party does not have a sizeable majority in Parliament, the result is chaotic with an



unstable Government living in constant fear of being thrown out. This is a sad state of affairs for the political and economic stability of a country. This is what happened to the Conservatives forcing them for an election before the scheduled date and costing the country the tax payer's money.

The current economic conditions in the U.S., it's repercussions in Canada and how a new

Government will grapple the crisis will no doubt be one of the main factors influencing the voter in the current elections. Other issues that will dominate the voters mind are healthcare, child care, housing, crime rate etc.

Come October 14 and the result will be known.

We are certain that Citizen Canada is intelligent enough to know where to put the cross on ballot day.

### Tamil Nadu CM calls for Indian intervention to "stop genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka"

Chief Minister of Southern Indian State of Tamil Nadu, M. Karunanidhi on Sunday October 5th called upon the people of his state to send telegrams to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh requesting him to "intervene immediately and stop the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka."

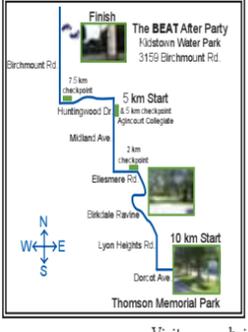
Following up and explaining his stand at a rally on Monday Oct 6th near Chennai, Chief minister M Karunanidhi delivered a veiled threat to withdraw his party's support to the Indian government at the centre; DMK leader said it would have to

think whether the government at the Centre should continue - if its warning to Sri Lankan government to stop the attacks on Tamils there went unheeded.

Karunanidhi expressed the hope that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi would take steps to end the ethnic strife in the island nation and ensure that Tamils there got justice. "If they (Centre) cooperate, we have a life. If they don't, Tamils in Sri Lanka and in India will also perish," he said at the rally.

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# Canada Newslines

## Terry Fox Run a huge success! Organized by Nicole & Duncan Fletcher



(Markham-Unionville)

The 28th annual Terry Fox Run in Markham-Unionville was a hot, sticky affair, but hundreds braved the heat and threat of rain to complete the 5km and 10 km course around scenic Toogood Pond to support the annual run done in memory of Canadian hero Terry Fox. Runners were sent on their way by Mayor Frank Scarpitti and Deputy Mayor, Jack Heath, both of whom have supported the run for many years.

Organizers Nicole & Duncan Fletcher challenged the community to not only beat the previous year's total of \$31,000, but reach \$50,000. With a few dollars still to be added from on-line donations the final total looks to be above that. Well done Markham-

Unionville!

The Terry Fox Run has always been a special event, not just because it resonates with so many at a personal, emotional level, but also because it is made possible by grass roots donations rather than traditional corporate support. This year was no different with dozens of volunteers and donors helping from every walk of life.

Special thanks to businesses who helped make the run possible like Village Grocer, Garden Basket, Longo's, Starbucks, Markham Economist and Sun, Long & McQuade, as well as the Town of Markham.

For more information of the Terry Fox Run please visit [www.terryfoxrun.org](http://www.terryfoxrun.org).

## TSH to benefit from Mid-Autumn Ball proceeds

Fall has officially arrived, and with it comes a traditional Chinese harvest celebration known as the Moon Festival. In recent years, the festival has been celebrated locally at the Mid-Autumn Ball, an annual gala to raise money for local healthcare initiatives. The Scarborough Chinese Outreach Committee is once again hosted this event on Sept. 27 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre-and The Scarborough Hospital is honoured to be the major beneficiary of this highly popular and successful fundraising event.

Now in its 13th year, the Mid-Autumn Ball will feature a dinner, dance and silent auction, as well as a special performance by Philadelphia soul group The Stylistics. Since its inception, the Mid-Autumn Ball has raised over \$2 million. This year's fundraising goal is \$250,000.

In addition to TSH receiving a share of the proceeds from the event, two \$1,000 scholarships

will be awarded to outstanding student volunteers from both hospital campuses, and four \$1,500 scholarship awards will be presented to healthcare professionals including pharmacists, dietitians, nurses and social workers dedicated to serving the Scarborough community.

"As The Scarborough Hospital works to strengthen its relationship with the diverse communities we serve, we are proud to participate in this wonderful annual celebration of togetherness," says Michael Mueller, Chair Designate of the incoming Board of Directors at TSH.

Mueller took part in a recent press conference to announce the upcoming Mid-Autumn Ball, where he thanked organizers for their ongoing commitment to improving healthcare in Scarborough.

Further details are available on the Scarborough Chinese Outreach Committee's website or by calling 416-720-3900.

## Simple and practical help for first-time homebuyers

(Markham-Unionville) The Conservative Government realizes the surprising list of closing costs, transfer taxes, inspection fees, appraisal fees, and legal fees for first-time home buyers. Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced if re-elected, the Conservative Government will give first-time homebuyers a tax credit for up to \$5,000 of the closing costs on the purchase of a new home. "As a Markham-Unionville resident, I understand the expensive process of purchasing your first home. I believe this tax credit will ease the process and be incredibly helpful for first-

time homebuyers in Markham-Unionville" says Duncan Fletcher, M.P. Conservative Candidate for Markham-Unionville.

The Conservative tax credit will not only benefit first-time homebuyers, but the Prime Minister also assures a boost to the construction industry as more jobs will be available because the demand for homes will be greater.

At a time of global economic uncertainty and the continuation of rising prices, the Conservative Government has protected the standard of living for Canadian families with highly beneficial measures such as:

Cutting the GST to 5% from 7%  
The \$100-per-month child care benefit

The \$2,000 tax credit for children under 18

The newly-established Tax-Free Savings Account

"The Conservative Government's plan is simple, practical, and can be trusted unlike the opposition's new carbon tax" Fletcher adds.

For further comment, information on Duncan Fletcher or the Conservative Party of Markham-Unionville, please contact;

Ben Seto - Campaign Manager; 416-859-6868

## PM Harper meets with leaders from the cultural communities in Toronto recently



Joining Prime Minister Harper was Jason Kenney, Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity,

Conservative candidates: CS Leung (Richmond Hill), Melissa Bhagat (Mississauga East-Cooksville), Jillian Saweczko (Parkdale High-Park) and Richard Lorello (Vaughan),

Community leaders: Tobias

Enverga (Philippine Independence Day Council), Wladyslaw Lizon (Canadian Polish Congress), Paul Grod (Ukrainian Canadian Congress), Aris Babikan (Armenian National Congress), Naseem Madhi (Ahmadiyya National Congress), Zubair Choudry (South-Asian Alliance), Victor Oh (Mississauga Chinese Business Association), Alan Winer (United

Jewish Appeal Federation), Maxwell Vo (Vietnamese Association of Toronto), Don Meredith (GTA Faith Alliance), Mohamed Manji (Ismaili Council of Canada), Peter Han (Ontario Korean Churches Alliance), Abdirashid Hassan Hersi (Canadian Somali Congress) and Mark Persaud (Canadian International Peace Project)

## CONSERVATIVES OFFER STABILITY AND A CLEAR DIRECTION

Harper says Conservatives helping to grow the GTA's economy

Prime Minister Stephen Harper highlighted the choice facing voters between now and Election Day. Speaking to supporters in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) riding of Ajax-Pickering, the Prime Minister contrasted the Conservative's proven, prudent plan with the risky promises being made by the opposition parties.

"Canadians will choose a government to look out for their interests, their earnings and their opportunities at a time of global

economic uncertainty," said Prime Minister Harper. "It's a choice between modest, focused investments and enormous, reckless spending promises. A choice between keeping taxes down and hiking them back up. A choice between staying in surplus and going back into deficit."

The Prime Minister went on to discuss FLOW, the Conservative Government's ambitious long-term transportation action plan to reduce gridlock, decrease smog and grow the GTA's economy.

Projects to be funded include: Extending Highway 407 to

Clarington.

Widening Highway 7 in Durham Region.

Extending Highway 404 north from Green Lane to Ravenshoe Road.

Rapid transit projects in Brampton, Mississauga, York Region and Durham Region.

"Our government is delivering for the GTA, but there's more to be done," said Prime Minister Harper. "And we need a strong team of Conservative MPs from the GTA in Ottawa to make it happen."

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From the Publisher's Desk ...

## November 14th, Creating diabetes awareness on World Diabetes Day

Diabetes is a leading killer and increased awareness is key for a healthy living.

The Monsoon Journal takes the opportunity of the upcoming World Diabetes Day to draw attention and awareness.

The International Diabetes Foundation has this to say on the World Diabetes Day initiative, on its website:

World Diabetes Day is celebrated each year on 14 November. The campaign is led by the International Diabetes Federation. In 2007, World Diabetes Day became an official United Nations world day, following the passage of the United Nations World Diabetes Day Resolution in December 2006.

World Diabetes Day is a campaign that each year features a theme chosen by the International Diabetes Federation to address issues facing the global diabetes community. In 2008, the World Diabetes Day theme is diabetes in children and adolescents.

World Diabetes Day was introduced in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in response to the alarming rise in diabetes around the world.

World Diabetes Day is a campaign that features a new theme chosen by the International Diabetes Federation each year to address issues facing the global

diabetes community.

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases to affect children. It can strike children of any age, even toddlers and babies.

If not detected early enough in a child, the disease can be fatal or result in serious brain damage. Yet diabetes in a child is often completely overlooked: it is often misdiagnosed as the flu or it is not diagnosed at all.

Every parent, school teacher, school nurse, doctor and anyone involved in the care of children should be familiar with the warning signs and alert to the diabetes threat, says the International Diabetes Federation.

Monsoon Journal takes this

time to communicate the seriousness of diabetes and the importance of proper diabetes control, as called for by researchers and medical professionals.

An increased awareness about diabetes and knowing its serious complications such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness and amputations calls for a life style towards healthier living and realizing living successfully with diabetes is achievable.

Joining hands to realize this mission, the Monsoon Journal supports all initiatives in creating diabetes awareness and will bring information through our Monsoon Health column and other pages throughout future issues.

## U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery Now Open, 50,000 from around the world will win Green Card

The 2010 Diversity Immigrant Visa Lottery will be formally declared open in Washington, DC on October 2, 2008. This program allows randomly selected applicants to immigrate to the United States on an expedited basis, provided they meet all the criteria. A person may only enter the lottery if he or she has: 1) citizenship of a qualifying country (Sri Lanka and the Maldives both qualify); and 2) either a high school equivalent education (Six GCE O-Levels including compulsory subjects) or work experience within the past five years in a profession that requires at least two years of training or experience to perform. Individuals wishing to participate in the visa lottery are strongly urged to apply early to avoid any possible delays. 50,000 individuals will be selected for the lottery worldwide.

For more information about the program, as well as details on the necessary qualifications, please see the US Embassy Colombo website at: <http://srilanka.usembassy.gov/>

The lottery registration period will be October 2 to December 1, 2008. Registration for the Diversity Visa Lottery is free. The lottery will be conducted entirely by electronic means over the internet. Paper entries will no longer be accepted. The State Department has established a website for the submission of entries, which can be accessed at: <http://www.dvlottery.state.gov/>

Successfully registered entries will result in the display of a confirmation screen containing the applicant's name, date of birth, country of chargeability (the country the applicant enters the lottery from), and a date and time stamp.

This confirmation screen can be printed as proof of registration in the lottery. An applicant may only register ONCE; more than one entry will result in automatic disqualification.

The Department of State Kentucky Consular Center in Williamsburg, Kentucky, will notify the lottery winners by mail (NOT e-mail) between May and July, 2009. If they qualify, they will then have a one-year window in which they may immigrate to the United States.

No fee is charged to enter the annual Diversity Visa program. The U.S. Government employs no outside consultants or private services to operate the visa lottery program. Any companies or intermediaries who offer assistance to prepare DV casework for applicants do so without the authority or consent of the U.S. Government. Beware of persons or companies making claims of affiliation with the U.S. Government or promising improved odds of selection.

A qualified entry submitted electronically directly by an applicant has an equal chance of being selected by the computer at the Kentucky Consular Center as does an entry submitted electronically through a paid intermediary who completes the entry for the applicant. Use of any outside intermediary or assistance to prepare a DV entry is entirely at the applicant's discretion.

Every entry received during the lottery registration period will have an equal random chance of being selected within its region. However, receipt of more than one entry per person will disqualify the person from registration, regardless of the source of the entry.

## Voice of America Editorial, 29 September 2008

In Sri Lanka, fighting has intensified between government forces and the insurgent Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or Tamil Tigers. Thousands of Sri Lankan civilians, many of whom are ethnic Tamils, are suffering as a result. As many as 200,000 men, women, and children are estimated to have been displaced.

The number of those civilians killed or injured in the fighting is not known, but the risk is great. Many of the refugees are short of food, water, and other necessities. The government of Sri Lanka recently requested that the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations depart areas of ongoing conflict in northern Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lanka Donor Co-Chairs, consisting of the European Union, Japan, Norway, and the United States, met in New York City on September 24th and stressed the need for humanitarian action to help civilians under threat.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher said that the Co-Chairs are placing "a lot of emphasis right now on the protection of human rights for civilians who are caught in the fighting, and the democratic government's responsibility for respecting and extending human rights protection to the people in the areas that they [the Sri Lankan government] take over."

Another urgent need, said Assistant Secretary Boucher, is humanitarian access to those dis-



placed and affected by the fighting. "Both sides need to make sure that they're not catching civilians in the crossfire, that they're letting people go to places where they can be safe, and that humanitarian deliveries can take place for these populations that are affected by the fighting," he said.

Mr. Boucher also said the Co-Chairs strongly support "United Nations organizations and humanitarian actors who are trying to take care of the displaced people and people affected by the fighting, working in government areas, working with the government" of Sri Lanka.

Since the Sri Lankan conflict began in 1983, more than 60,000 people have died and about one million others have been displaced. During 2007, the U.S. provided some \$26 million in humanitarian aid to the displaced.

The United States urges all parties to the conflict in Sri Lanka to respect the human rights of all Sri Lankan civilians, including allowing freedom of movement and humanitarian access.

[Voice of America Editorial - reflecting the views of the US Government]

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# Monsoon Newsline

## U.S. conservation win - in Canada

Forestland half the size of Texas is being saved to help thwart climate change.

By Jeff Wells, David Wilcove and Scott Weidensaul

from the September 22, 2008 edition

Philadelphia - It may be the biggest conservation victory for the US in decades. It ensures that massive amounts of greenhouse gases won't be released to add to global warming. It ensures an abundance of birds for generations of Americans to enjoy. And you may not have heard anything about it.

That's because it just happened in Ontario, Canada.

Over the summer, Ontario's premier, Dalton McGuinty, announced that at least 55 million acres - half of the province's boreal forest - will be off limits to development. And he has promised no new mining or logging projects until local land-use plans have support from native communities. The scale of the decision is staggering, and it commits Ontario to setting aside lands more than twice the size of Pennsylvania as parks or wildlife refuges.

Equally impressive was Premier McGuinty's strong reliance on the recommendation by scientists, led by Nobel Prize-winning authors of the International Panel on Climate Change, to make that decision.

Scientists identify the Canadian boreal forest, larger than the remaining Brazilian Amazon, as one of the world's largest and most intact forest ecosystems. It stores 186 billion tons of carbon - equivalent to 27 years of the world's carbon dioxide fossil fuel emissions - and provides habitat for billions of breeding birds, plus many other wildlife species.

There are herds of caribou, healthy populations of bears and wolves, and some of the world's last wild undammed rivers and pristine lakes. Many of the birds either winter in the US or pass through during their spring and fall migrations.

Millions of dark-eyed juncos, white-throated sparrows and Swainson's thrushes are among the songbirds that raise their young in this now-protected region and that will soon be arriving in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Hunters have reason to be happy, too, since those forests also sustain huge numbers of waterfowl like American black ducks, common goldeneyes and buffleheads that grace US waters in the winter.

Placing half of Ontario's boreal forest off limits to development and industrial use helps to ensure



that the carbon currently stored there stays put. And it protects the habitat of the abundant wildlife of the boreal forest. Moreover, by protecting large, unfragmented blocks of habitat, McGuinty may help to ensure the survival of still other species that are forced to move north to adapt to our warming planet.

In recent years, scientists have increasingly come to realize that the old benchmark of protecting 10 to 15 percent of an ecosystem is not enough. That level of protection cannot ensure that abundant wildlife, clean air and water, and a stable climate are maintained. Instead, scientists recommend a benchmark closer to 50 percent protection. McGuinty's bold announcement is one of the few instances where a government leader has met these recommended goals.

Politicians operate within the confines of public support. Without strong public interest in conservation, McGuinty would not have made this move. That's a good reminder for those who care about maintaining and protecting our natural resources to make our voices heard so that politicians, on both sides of the border, have the opportunity for bold, environmentally friendly leadership.

And while strong public interest in and support of conservation was important in making this landmark decision, bold environmentally friendly leadership doesn't come from the polls alone. It comes from strong leaders who, as McGuinty did in this matter, put the greater good over everyday politics.

You've got to admire his courage when, in the United States, many leaders seem intent on trying to weaken laws that protect the country's conservation lands. Consider Wyoming: State officials, with the help of a federal judge, recently took a disappointing step toward overturning the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, which protects roughly the last one-third of the nation's undeveloped national forest lands. Then there is the Bush administration's plans to weaken

habitat protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Ontario is setting an example of leadership and large-scale thinking for the rest of Canada and, indeed, for the world to follow. Now it's up to the leaders of the US, whether they work in state houses or the White House, to fight to protect our last wild places.

In the meantime, thanks to the actions of McGuinty, generations of Americans will be able to step out on their back porches this fall and witness the splendor of migration as millions of birds head south from the now-protected lands in Ontario's boreal forest.

o Jeff Wells is the science adviser to The Pew Charitable Trusts' International Boreal Conservation Campaign. David Wilcove is a professor in the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University. Scott Weidensaul has written more than two dozen books on natural history.

## Foreign Minister visits the riding of Duncan Fletcher

Foreign Minister David Emerson met several candidates in Markham on Tuesday, September 30th at Duncan Fletcher campaign office. Duncan Fletcher introduced the minister to the media and audience.

One of the agenda was the latest development of Canada China relations. Minister in his speech explained the importance of the immigration and trade mis-

sions and answered questions raised by the media. Other candidates also spoke were, Duncan Fletcher, Markham-Unionville candidate, Benson Lau, Scarborough-Agincourt candidate and Chungsen Leung, Richmond Hill candidate.

Then the Minister went on a tour and met the shop owners at Kennedy Square, SW corner of Kennedy/Hwy 7)



Foreign Minister David Emerson with Duncan Fletcher and Chungsen Leung



Minister with Conservative candidates

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# Monsoon Newsline

## Raj Rajaratnam among 400 richest Americans

Mr. Raj Rajaratnam, who together with his Galleon Fund is one of the biggest shareholders of Sri Lanka's John Keells Holdings (JKH), has been ranked No.262 in the Forbes Magazine's list of 400 Richest Americans.

Rajaratnam, a self-made billionaire, has a net worth of US\$ 1.8 billion according to the respected Forbes publication.

Now 51 years old, he is married with three children, and has substantial investments in some well known companies other than JKH listed on the Colombo bourse.

He took a Bachelor's degree from the University of Sussex in the UK before taking a MBA from Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

His father who was a senior Singer executive in Sri Lanka later ran the Asian operation for Singer multinational from New York.

Rajaratnam had an early career as an investment banker in Needham & Company of which he became President in 1991, the



Forbes Rich List said.

Six years later he founded the hedge fund Galleon group, "making big bets on healthcare and technology companies" and today manages US\$ 7.5 billion across six funds.

According to the Forbes report the annual return on funds managed by the Galleon group had been 21% net of fees since 1997 and last year Galleon's flagship fund returned 30% before fees.

[island.lk]

## Bollywood, India's 'soft power' of future, says book

Bollywood, considered a living example of success of cultural openness, has all the traits to emerge as India's 'soft power' of the future, says a Deutsche Bank chief economist.

"Over the years, Bollywood has copied, twisted and even 'stolen' ideas from other countries and cultures. Indian musicians and directors are entering and exploring the world of Western entertainment. Yet, this has diminished neither the growing global popularity of Indian entertainment nor its unique flavour. Hopefully, the resurgent India of the future will be like Bollywood," writes Sanjeev Sanyal in "The Indian Renaissance: India's Rise after a Thousand Years of Decline", by Penguin India.

He questions: "So what will India's 'soft power' of the future look like? One example is already visible - Bollywood. India's film industry is already the world's largest in terms of the number of

films produced and second largest after Hollywood in terms of its global reach.

"Indian films and music have long been popular from Morocco to Indonesia. Expatriate Indians have spread them wherever they have settled - the UK, Singapore, Dubai and the US. Despite political differences and government bans, Indian films are watched in every town and village in Pakistan.

One of the first things that Afghans did after NATO forces drove out the Taliban was to bring out their hidden collections of Hindu music." According to the writer, India was at the height of its power a thousand years ago, influencing the world with its ideas and trade. Now, ten centuries later, India's recent economic performance is once again attracting world attention as the country re-awakens not just as an economy but as a civilisation.

[PTI]

**Tamilnadu Chief Minister Karunanithi receives Periyar Award from Finance Minister Anbhalagan. Standing left to him is his son, Minister M.K. Stalin**



## Restoration time at the Madurai Meenakshi temple

By: R. Sairam

Centuries-old pillars to be cleaned scientifically

MADURAI: A major effort is under way to restore the centuries-old pillars of the Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple to their original state.

Under a restoration process using non-toxic chemicals, technicians have begun to remove multiple coats of limestone, paint and other artificial substances that have accumulated on the pillars.

Initially, 350 pillars would be covered in three months at an estimated cost of Rs. 5 lakh, K. Rajanayagam, Executive Officer, said. Painting done decades ago has resulted in accumulated coatings over the original pillars.

"In those days, people wanted the temple to be colourful during big events and painted them," he said. Thankfully, there is more awareness on the need to preserve the original beauty of granite pillars. The natural beauty of the sculptures should be there for all to see and the present exercise would ensure that, he said.

The restoration is undertaken by a firm headed by V.R. Gunasekaran, a heritage conservator trained by the National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, Lucknow.

The chemicals being used, he said, would not have any adverse effect on the original structure. An appropriate mix of liquefied ammonia, non-ionic detergent and other stone-friendly materials is initially applied and then washed off by spraying plain water. The process is repeated till all additional layers are removed. A preservative coating is applied on the pillars.

It would protect the heritage



structures from environmental pollution and decay, which could be caused by application of oil. The application of a preservative coating had been proposed to the temple authorities, he said.

Highlighting the difference between sand-blasting, a process prohibited in 2000, and chemical

process, he said that while the former almost altered the original structure, the latter went to extreme lengths to avoid damage.

The water pressure to be used is determined after ascertaining the strength of each pillar.

Courtesy: The Hindu

## In Search for a home

A Sri Lankan widow with her one-year-old child and daughter at Dhanuskodi, India on Sep 26th. They were among eighteen refugees from Sri Lanka who landed on Arichalmunai, Dhanuskodi on Thursday Sep 25th, bringing the total number of refugees who have reached Rameswaram in September to 133. Rameswaram is a town in Ramanathapuram district in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.



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# Monsoon Newsline

## I am a true Dravidian, says Jayalalitha



By N Ravikumar

In an attempt to erase her image of a Brahmin with Hindutva leanings, AIADMK chief Ms Jayalalitha has said that she was a true Dravidian, possessing the real characteristics of the race.

Quoting a film song from matinee idol and party founder MGR's Mannadhi mannan, which says: "Fear is foolishness and courage is the characteristic of Dravidians", she said that she alone had the courage to stand up to the Centre and fight for state's rights, unlike DMK leader Mr M Karunanidhi, who had "betrayed the rights of Tamils to stay in power", while addressing a public meeting recently.

When it came to issues concerning Tamil Nadu: "The Centre was afraid of me. The Centre was afraid to go against the rights of Tamil Nadu, when I was the chief minister", she said while addressing a mammoth gathering, at this southern district bordering the Western Ghats, a stronghold of the AIADMK right from its inception.

She alleged that Mr Karunanidhi was afraid to fight the Centre for state's rights and asked: "Can anyone who does not have courage, the real characteristic of the Dravidian race, call himself a Dravidian".

In a bid to exploit the growing anger of Tamil nationalist outfits against the DMK, which is a part of the UPA government, providing military assistance to the Sri Lankan government, the AIADMK chief charged that the DMK government had sacrificed the interests of Tamils, since he was relying on Congress' support to save his government in Tamil Nadu.

Charging Mr Karunanidhi with sacrificing Tamils' rights in the Katchatheevu (an island acceded to Sri Lanka), Cauvery and Mullaiperiyar issues, Ms

Jayalalitha refrained from her usual allegations of LTTE infiltration and avoided comments against the LTTE, an outfit strongly backed by her ally Mr Vaiko and a potential ally the PMK, besides the CPI, which too is supporting the self determination rights of Tamils in the island nation.

The AIADMK leader also refrained from mentioning the Ram Sethu issue, which would have embarrassed the Left parties, which are considering an alliance with the AIADMK and keenly observing Ms Jayalalitha's moves and utterances.

Setting the momentum for the Lok Sabha election campaign, the AIADMK leader listed the prices of essential commodities, comparing them with the prices during her regime. "Should the Central and state governments, which are unable to contain the skyrocketing prices, continue or not?", she asked, eliciting a loud 'no' from the huge gathering.

Fighting the DMK government for frequent power cuts, she said lack of planning and co-ordination had resulted in this situation. Having a dig at the State Electricity Minister Mr N Veerasamy, by calling him as "state powercut Minister", she said, he had failed to retain the quantity of electricity, being provided to Tamil Nadu by the Centre during the AIADMK regime.

She also charged Mr Karunanidhi with nepotism and said the chief minister was promoting the interests of his sons, daughter and grand children. Ms Jayalalitha also charged that the state government was having many power centres, since the members of the chief minister's family were interfering in the state administration and appointment of officials.

[thestatesman.net]

## India's Defence Minister: While taking action against LTTE, steps should also be taken to protect Tamil civilians

India's Defence Minister A K Antony was quoted by Press Trust of India (PTI) on Monday Sep 15th as saying: "While taking action against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), steps should also be taken to protect the civilian Tamils in Sri Lanka and ensure their safety and security."

The statement by the Indian Defence Minister has come in the wake of reports that Indian military personnel were involved in providing military support to the Sri Lankan forces.

"We have already expressed our concern to the Lankan authorities," Mr. A K Antony told reporters while replying to question on the situation in the island country, the PTI reported adding that India has asked Colombo to ensure their safety and security.

At least two Indian radar operators were wounded recently when LTTE launched a major attack on Sri Lankan forces Vanni headquarters, located in Vavuniya. Following the reports of Indian personnel at the offensive headquarters of the Sri Lankan forces in Vanni, several Tamil leaders in Tamil Nadu, including the leftist parties have condemned India's active engagement in Sri Lanka's war against Eezham Tamils in the island of Sri Lanka.

Vaiko, the general secretary of the MDMK, in a letter to sent Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, has charged that according to the information he had, there was a large number of Indian technocrats and military personnel, up to 265 persons, who were fully engaged and



assisting the Sri Lankan military.

"Now the Indian Government is caught red handed in its unpardonable betrayal against the Tamils," he said and blamed the top level bureaucrats in India, particularly the national security adviser, for "clandestinely conspiring" with the Sri Lankan government.

[TN]

## India need not be alarmed by US crisis: Chidambaram

Indian banks are largely insulated from the US financial crisis, which consumed that country's fourth largest investment bank, and there was no cause for any alarm, Finance Minister P Chidambaram said recently.

In his first reaction to the collapse of Lehman Brothers and bail-out of insurer American International Group (AIG) by the US Fed, he said the government would continue to pursue reforms to retain near 8 per cent economic growth momentum.

"Let me assure everyone there is no cause for any alarm that any Indian bank is exposed or vulnerable like a couple of banks that have failed in the United States," Chidambaram told reporters after a briefing on decisions taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs here.

He also said the Tatas, majority stakeholders in Tata-AIG joint venture, have assured the government that they would meet all the obligations to their policyholders.

As far as PSU banks are concerned, Chidambaram said they didn't have any undue exposure and whatever exposure they have are in accordance with RBI's guidelines. Although ICICI Bank had some exposure, it has made disclosures for the same.

Putting a brave face, he said Indian economy will grow close to eight per cent. "I still maintain my view that growth in 2008-09 will be close to eight per cent." Chidambaram saw no reasons to halt financial reforms. "Having regard to the context, having

regard to international situation and having regard to our ability to keep regulations one step ahead of innovation...

"As long as regulation remains a step ahead of innovation, there is no reason to fear that financial sector reforms will cause us difficulties or problems."

[PTI]



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# Monsoon Newsline

by Usha Sri-Skanda-Rajah

Full Text of Speech given at UN rally by Eelam Tamils on September 24, 2008

A plea to the UN to Save Tamil Children in Sri Lanka as Mahinda Rajapakse addresses the UN General Assembly:

Ladies and Gentlemen, Brothers and Sisters,

I come to you as a mother; I make this desperate plea on behalf of mothers - Tamil mothers all over all over the world who are traumatized by the suffering of innocent children - our Tamil children who are facing genocide at the hands of Mahinda Rajapakse and his treacherous Sinhala forces.

It's despicable and morally reprehensible that Mahinda Rajapakse is being given a platform in the United Nations to tell lies, while he is right on cue in his agenda driven to pursue the continuing genocide of the Tamil people.

I say, Mahinda Rajapakse has blood on his hands.

I ask that I be heard in these "August Halls."

I make this earnest appeal to all the moral super powers of the world, the caring and compassionate member states of the United Nations to "Save Tamil children". I urge you to stop Mahinda Rajapakse from starving and bombing our children in contravention of the Geneva Conventions.

Let me tell you about Mahinda Rajapakse. - Mahinda Rajapakse a virtual dictator, aided and abetted by his brothers and family is running Sri Lanka like his 'own household' where he is in full control of major part of the purse strings. It's "all in the family" ladies and gentlemen - it's "all in the family."

We are talking about Sri Lanka!

- Where corruption nepotism, family bandy-ism and terror rule supreme.

- Where democracy is a farce. True democracy is defined as a form of society characterized by social equality and tolerance. It's not so in Sri Lanka. The kind of democracy prevalent in Sri Lanka has led to the very oppression and persecution of the Tamil people.

As women and mothers we

## Save the Children

have been warning the International Community that Mahinda Rajapakse's unilateral abrogation of the ceasefire agreement was of great concern to us. We have said his determination to pursue a destructive war would result in civilian deaths, ethnic cleansing and displacement of a magnitude that would end in the extermination of a people. And true to our word Mahinda Rajapakse having ordered local and international humanitarian aid agencies out, denied access to International media and imposed an embargo on all essential items needed to sustain life including food and medicine is all poised to destroy the Tamil people. If the United Nations does not act, I say before it's too late - Sri Lanka will be another Rwanda. Having learned the bitter lessons of Rwanda as mothers we urge the United Nations to be vigilant and not let another Rwanda happen in Sri Lanka.

Ladies and gentlemen as mothers we fear for our Tamil children. We want urgent action. We want a United Nations field presence in the Tamil Homeland.

We urge the United Nations to force Mahinda Rajapakse to:

\* Comply with obligations to stationing a human rights monitoring mission in Sri Lanka to stop all human rights abuses and acts of state terrorism

\* To end the military offensive and re-instate the ceasefire agreement

\* To reopen the major highways to the north and east ensuring access to the north and East for local and international humanitarian aid to flow freely and for providing for the free movement of people goods and services.

\* To address the Tamil national Question and come to a negotiated settlement that reflects Tamil aspirations for self determination in their traditional homeland.

We do not approve of Mahinda Rajapakse's bid to set up 'bogus' provincial councils presenting it as a viable solution to the ethnic crisis and canvassing support for it in international circles. Mahinda Rajapakse is fooling



Children's education has been severely disrupted by continual running between the classroom and bunker. Nearly half of the children in the Vanni are now displaced, having to share overcrowded schools [pic: BBC]



Sri-Skanda-Rajah Speaking at UN Rally. Photo: TamilNet

the International Community when he gleefully boasts about what he has done in the East after placing his stooges there and making a mockery of democracy with promises of development but none so far. We guarantee that it would be few that would enjoy the perks and privileges he is offering as patronage - if not stopped it would ruin the very fabric of 'Eastern Values' and sustained development.

Tamils do not approve of Provincial Councils which according to legal luminaries are glorified "local authorities" It shows that Sinhalese politicians 'do not get it'; it shows a callous disregard and contemptuous lack of understanding of the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil people.

As an effective deterrent to

forcing Rajapakse into compliance, the United Nations member countries must:

\* stop all military support including the sale of arms to the government of Sri Lanka.

\* withdraw all foreign-aid and debt relief to Sri Lanka

\* Impose trade and economic sanctions against Sri Lanka.

As mothers we ask this so that Tamil children living in their traditional homeland in the island of Sri Lanka can enjoy true freedom, security and human rights THAT EVERY CHILD is entitled to under the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child. Death and destruction, abject poverty, poor health, malnutrition, hunger, lack of education, deprivation and displacement has taken its

toll on Tamil children.

The deplorable conditions in which our Tamil children are growing was highlighted by the International Federation of Tamils' (IFT) Working Group on the Rights of the Child in its report "Cry Of NorthEast Child" where it laid a damning indictment at the feet of successive Sri Lankan governments who have by their actions and omissions violated international law, namely the Convention on the Rights of the Child - article 2 (non discrimination) article 3 (best interests of the child) article 6 (survival and development) article 10 (family reunification) article 20 (protection of child without family) article 23 (disabled children) article 24 (health and health services) article 26 (social security) article 27 (standard of living) article 28 (education) article 29 (aims of education) and article 31 (leisure recreation and cultural activities).

As our children stand at death's door we plead to the world. As death and displacement rise our children in Sri Lankan government controlled areas of the Tamil homeland are the most vulnerable children in the world and more so in the war affected targeted zone of the dreaded Sri Lankan armed forces in the North including the Vanni.

The grim realities of the future of our children are being felt deeply by us mothers. The pain and the suffering of children in an ever worsening crisis with no reprieve, with no end in sight are agonizing for us mothers.

We as mothers ask that our cry be heard.

We want the United Nations TO FREE THE TAMIL PEOPLE and SAVE THE CHILDREN from the tyranny of Mahinda Rajapakse and his men - who claim to be 'guardians of the state' but have no qualms of killing a people who have just as much right to live in a safe and secure environment enjoying self determination in their homeland in the island of Sri Lanka as any other.

As mothers we make this plea to the United Nations to please "save our children."

So that soon they too can enjoy full rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

[sangam.org]

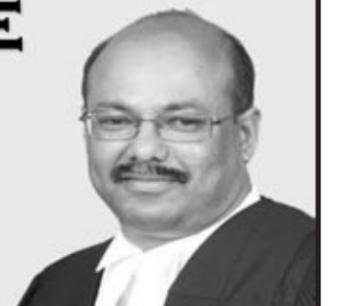
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# Monsoon Health



## Massage Therapy... The powers of touch

By Mithura Anandarajah, PT  
Registered Physiotherapist

There are days when you crawl out of bed and you feel the creaking of your joints or the aching stiffness as you stretch. You feel the knots in your shoulders or the ache in your back. There are other days when you're at work until eleven at night, trying to make a deadline. Your head is pounding and fatigue is catching up. There are different ways to cope with pain, stress or fatigue. Massage Therapy is an alternative that has been around for many years. It is an alterna-

tive with little side effects and a lot of gain. Massage therapy refers to a group of practices or techniques which involve the application of different pressures on soft tissue; therapists primarily use their hands to manipulate the tissue. The result is an increase in circulation, the breakdown of scar tissue and a decrease in pain or stiffness.

Massage is one of the oldest healing arts: Chinese records dating back 3,000 years document its use; the ancient Hindus, Persians

and Egyptians applied forms of massage for many ailments and Hippocrates wrote papers recommending the use of rubbing and friction for joint and circulatory problems. Today, massage therapy techniques are varied and far-reaching. As an accepted part of many physical rehabilitation programs, massage therapy has also proven beneficial for many chronic conditions, including low back pain, arthritis, bursitis, fatigue, high blood pressure, diabetes, immunity suppression, infertility, smoking cessation, depression, and more. And, as many millions will attest, massage also helps relieve the stress and tension of everyday living that can lead to disease.

The techniques of massage can be varied. It can involve the use of hands or elbows. Swedish massage is a technique where the therapist uses long strokes, kneading and applying friction on the tissue. Deep tissue massage may involve using extensive pressure through the muscles that are



tight and knotted. Trigger point massage is another technique where a deeper force is used on focused locations called myofascial trigger points - knots that form within the muscle, which can often refer pain throughout the muscle or elsewhere in the body.

The benefits of massage therapy are many. The manipulation of soft tissue increases circulation which promotes healing; it enhances lymph flow which increases immunity. It facilitates the stretch of tight muscles and breaks down scar tissue or adhesions. This results in improving flexibility and range of motion.

Massage therapy relieves stress, reduces the intensity of migraine headaches and can lessen depression or anxiety. It is often used to facilitate labor for expectant mothers.

In choosing a practitioner, it is probably best to choose a Registered Massage Therapist who is governed by their professional body. Extended insurance plans may offer coverage to cover the cost of the service. As the end of the year approaches, this is the best time to take advantage of your plan and benefit from the powers of touch.



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# Diwali Recipe - by Chef Nate

## Rawa Ladoo



### Ingredients

- 2 cups semolina (rawa)
- 1 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup ghee
- 1 tbsp. broken cashew nuts, fried
- 1 tbsp. raisins, fried
- 1 tsp. cardamom powder

### Method

1. Heat 1 tsp. Ghee (clarified butter) in a pan and dry roast the rawa till pink
2. Grind the fried rawa and powdered sugar in a mixer to a fine powder.
3. Heat the remaining Ghee (clarified butter) and add the powdered rawa, cashew nuts, raisins and cardamom powder. Mix thoroughly
4. While still warm, make into small lemon-sized balls. Cool and store

## Coconut Burfi



### Ingredients

- 1 cup Sugar
- 1 cup Water
- 2 tsp. ghee (clarified butter)
- 1 cup Desiccated coconut
- 6 Crushed cardamoms
- 1/4 cup Chopped cashewnuts

### Method

1. Heat the sugar and water on a low heat to make thick syrup.
2. Remove any scum from the syrup. Add the finely grated coconut and crushed cardamoms. Mix thoroughly.
3. Grease a plate with the Ghee (clarified butter) and set aside.
4. Turn off the heat while the mixture is still a thick pouring consistency. Add the chopped cashew nuts. Mix thoroughly.
5. Pour the coconut mixture onto the greased plate and quickly spread with a spatula.
6. After a few minutes, cut into diamond-shaped pieces with a sharp knife and Store in an airtight container.

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# Sarah Palin with PM

"You look gorgeous." The comment by the Pakistani President, Mr Asif Ali Zardari, and his offer to hug the Republican vice presidential candidate, Ms Sarah Palin, has got him into some trouble with Pakistani media.

"You look gorgeous. Now I know why the whole of America is crazy about you," Mr Zardari said on meeting Ms Palin here on Wednesday. "You are so nice," Ms Palin responded.

When an aide asked them to pose again, Ms Palin said with a smile, "I am supposed to pose again?" To which Mr Zardari quipped: "If the aide is insisting, I might hug." Earlier, a sense of unease was written large on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's face when Ms Palin came calling on him.

Some journalists present at the meeting said that Ms Palin was equally uncomfortable. A journalist said: "Our people seem to focus on Dr Singh's level of discomfort, but look at her level of discomfort. She is an ordinary moose hunter, no experience in politics. She should have been more uncom-



comfortable meeting Dr Singh, a first rate economist, Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy."

# Demon king Ravana eulogized in Allahabad

Scores of people in Allahabad participated in a procession to sing praise of Ravana, the mythological demon-king representing evil on Thursday, Sep 25th.

A number of tableaux depicting Ravana's strength and the grandeur of his court formed a part of the procession. Many people participated in the procession dressed up as Ravana, his wife Mandodari, his brother Kumbhakaran and his son Meghnath.

They said although the demon-king Ravana represented evil in Hindu mythology, he was a learned Brahmin and is worshiped for that reason.

"Today, we are worshiping the king of Lanka, Ravana. A big procession is also being taken out in the city. Since he (Ravana) was a Brahmin by caste, he is worshipped just like any Brahmin," said Jitendra Prasad Chaudhary, a resident.

Locals claimed that this procession has been traditionally taken out every year for more than 500 years.

"This tradition has been going on for years. I have come here to see this procession. The world can see this. This does not take place anywhere else," said Hamendra Nath Goswami, a spectator.

Local priests said the city was the location of Sage Bharadwaj's hermitage and as per his preaching upper caste Brahmins are to be worshipped and Ravana was also a Brahmin.

But after about 13 days on 'Dussahara', which symbolizes the triumph of good over evil, the effigies of Ravana, Kumbhakaran and Meghnath would be burnt amid great fanfare and religious devotion, marking the end of the nine day long Hindu festival of "Navratri".



**Statue of Ravana in Thirukoneswaram, a temple for lord Shiva in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka. Historians believe Ravana worshipped Thirukoneswaram [Photo: Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai]**

According to Hindu epic Rama-yana, Ravana abducted warrior king Ram's consort Sita. Rama then waged a war against Ravana to release Sita from demon-king's captivity. He defeated Ravana on Dussehra day. Rama's victory over Ravana is depicted as the triumph of good over evil.

(ANI)

# Get set to relive the magic of MGR, NTR classics

South Indian cinema buffs are in for a treat - classic films of yesteryears superstars N.T. Ramarao and M.G. Ramachandran are all set to be rereleased with better colour and additional visuals.

Srinivasa Kalyanam, a black and white costume drama that catapulted former Andhra Pradesh CM N.T. Ramarao to fame in the 1960s, is being colour-corrected for release later this month, producer O.K. Mani said.

Its Telugu version Venkateshwara Mahatmyam too is getting ready simultaneously. Two fresh songs composed by M.S. Vishwanathan have been added to the movie.

According to Mani, several computer graphic visuals and snatches of the annual festival at the famed temple in Tirupati have been added to Srinivasa Kalyanam. The film's total

length has, however, been trimmed to 120 minutes and its sound has been digitised to fit it into the modern movie idiom.

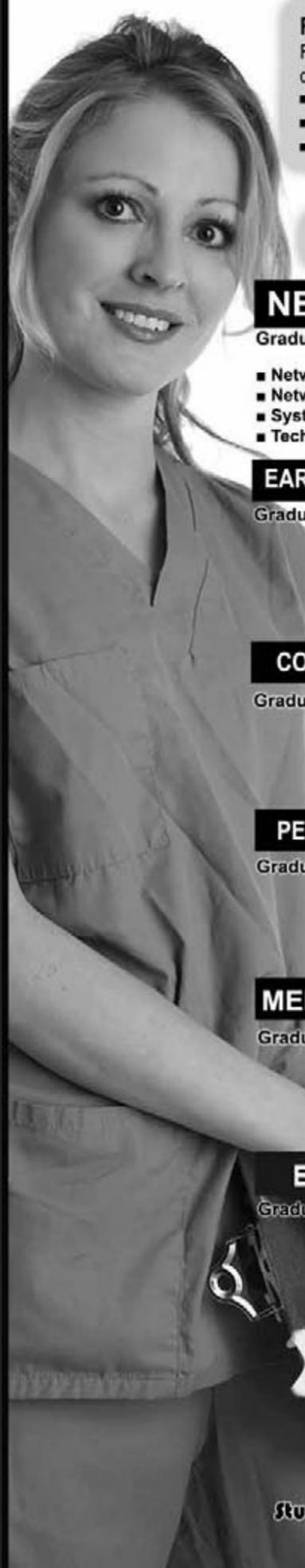
Mani has also acquired the rights to re-release movies of late Tamil Nadu chief minister M.G. Ramachandran. Spurred by the successful re-release of the Hindi classic Mughal-e-Azam, the producer said that three of MGR's classics were being re-edited and would be released soon.

"While people were not very sure about the commercial angle for the Hindi films, NTR and MGR-starrers are evergreen box office bets because whenever they are released, they collect a sizeable amount of money. Besides, both are cult figures even today," Mani said.



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# Monsoon Newsline

## Selva Sannithi Murugan Temple Chariot Festival

The Selva Sannithi Murugan Temple, Jaffna is situated in the village of Thondaimanaru.

The village is nestled in Vadamarachi region of Jaffna district in Sri Lanka towards the northern tip of the spectacular Jaffna Peninsula. It is landscaped by mountains, desert land, coastlines and fertile plains.

The Selva Sannithi Temple, Jaffna serves as the abode of Lord Murugan.

The god of Love, beauty and knowledge has been exerting his charm on devotees around the globe. The word Muruga is derived from the Tamil word 'Murugu' which means honey, beauty, fragrance and eternal youth. He is handsome, brilliant, elegant and enchanting. He symbolizes valour, youthfulness, benevolence and compassion.

Annual Chariot festival of Selva Sannithi Murugan temple took place Sunday 14th of September 2008.

The Sri Lanka Army troops were present everywhere in the temple vicinity according to media

Devotees on Chariot Festival day



Kaavadi on Chariot Festival Day

reports, and subjected the devotees to rigorous checking and interrogation.

It is not known whether anyone has been taken into custody during the check and interrogation.

Though transport facilities were available for the festival the number of devotees was found less this year than the festivals drew from all parts of Jaffna peninsula last year, the temple authorities said.

Sep 14, 2008 Selva Sannithi Murugan Temple



## Mridhanga Arangetram of Master Thineshan Kathirchelvan

Mridhanga Arangetram of Master Thineshan Kathirchelvan presented by Sabtheswara Fine Arts of Toronto was held on August 10th at Armenian Youth Centre. He is one of the proud disciple of Shri. Uthayakumar Krishnamoorthy. Thineshan learned under his direct guidance for the last seven years to demonstrate his performance in front a large audience. Thineshan got congratulatory messages

and blessings for his talent and performance from the Chief Guest Ashok Ramani, Guest of Honor Thampiah Sripathy who is also Lawyer and President of Thamils Isai Kala Manram. He also got blessings from his parents, family and friends and well wishers. Ramprashan Jeyaram did an excellent job as the master of ceremony.

Some Pictures taken at the event.



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# Monsoon Features

## The Making of a President Part 1 - "America in Danger"

By Siva Sivapragasam

As confetti rained on him and fireworks burst across the Colorado sky, Barack Obama accepted his nomination at the Denver Football Stadium to be the most powerful man in the world, "with profound gratitude and great humility", before a stunning crowd of over 60,000 cheering supporters.

In his soul stirring nomination acceptance speech, Obama blamed President George Bush for his failed policies resulting in the present economic conditions in U.S. and insisted that "America needs a change". He said "America, we are better than these last eight years. We are a better country than this". Barack Obama has an advantageous position in his campaign as compared with Republican candidate John McCain because of the present economic conditions in the U.S. with high oil prices, loss of jobs and falling house prices. No lesser person that the incumbent President of U.S., George Bush himself has admitted that America is in Danger.

Signals are flashing that the economy is heading for a crumbling crash with downward home prices, foreclosures and plunging retirement benefits, in spite of a \$ 700 billion bail-out by the Government for the ailing economy.

**Who will rescue the country and the people from this impending catastrophe?**

**Barack Obama or John McCain!**

**Come November 4th. and the world will know the answer.**

Barack Obama is the result of a midnight union between a black young man from Kenya and a white young woman from Kansas. When his parents separated, young Obama grew up in the very early years under the wings of his mother who took him to Indonesia. He studied in a Muslim school in Djakarta and returned to Hawaii where he was baptized as a Christian and grew up with his maternal grand parents. Barack Obama showed intelligence and

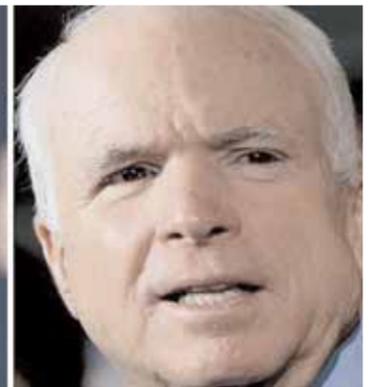


Young Obama with his mother, step sister Maya and step father



The Obama Family - Barack, wife Michelle and his two daughters

brightness which led him for a Law Degree from the Harvard Law School. He worked for a Law firm where he met a fellow associate-Michelle, later his wife-to be. In his young days Obama was conscious of racism and what it meant to be African-American. In his memoirs, he describes how he struggled to reconcile social perceptive of his



Barack Obama & John McCain, the contenders for the Presidency

multi-racial heritage.

Barack Obama's opponent for the Presidency John McCain is a war veteran who fought for his country in the Vietnam War. Unfortunately for McCain, he has an uphill task in winning the Presidency due to the present economic conditions in the U.S. for which the blame is laid on the incumbent Republican Government. U.S. economy is crashing and the danger of a massive recession is looming large. Plummeting house prices, failing mortgages, millions losing employment, Bank closures, evaporating retirement savings are some of the danger signals ahead for America.

No doubt, White House needs a Democrat if a change is to take place. As the Presidential campaign enters it's last chapter both candidates are staking their claims to the

voters vigorously. Obama seems to enjoy a unanimous support of the African Americans. However, Obama does not pitch his campaign on race. He says "I reject a politics that is based solely on racial identity, gender identity, sexual orientation or victimhood generally".

The Clinton couple has given their fullest support to Obama by declaring that Obama is their candidate for the Presidency. Many Americans see Obama as the light at the end of the tunnel and expect him to bail out America from it's present ills.

Forty Years ago, Rev. Martin Luther King had a dream.

Now, Barack Obama is bent on making the dream a reality.

*(Next: Part 2 - "America needs a Change")*

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# Monsoon Features

Mortgages defaulted, Credits crunched, Dollar value cracked, Economy inflated by structured products narrowing to reality, and now finally US Financial system is in turmoil. It is not going to end up with the US. It is going to have impact on Canadian financial market and economy, and further spreading to have serious impact on global financial system and the world economy. This is a major crisis since the Great Depression. Economists and bankers call it as 'Systematic Failure' in other terms financial failure of the institutions involved, that would bring financial death spiral in which firms suck one another through their assets and liabilities link into the abyss. By buying US financial products, investors spread the risks around the globe. Nouriel Roubini, economics professor at New York University said that if the economy slips into recession 'when you have a systemic banking crisis like we haven't had since the 1930s'.

As we mentioned in our Monsoon Journal April 2008 issue, subprime mortgage crisis has caused to the ongoing economic problem manifesting itself through liquidity issues in the banking system owing to foreclosures which accelerated in the United States in late 2006 and triggered a global financial crisis during 2007 and 2008. The crisis began with the bursting of the US housing bubble and high default rates on subprime and other adjustable rate mortgages (ARM) made to higher-risk borrowers with lower income or lesser credit history than prime borrowers. Defaults and foreclosure activity increased dramatically as ARM interest rates reset higher. During 2007, nearly 1.3 million U.S. housing properties were subject to foreclosure activity.

**Impact of Derivative Products and Failure of Investment Giants and Banks**

Investment banks are heavily relied on derivatives to increase profits. Greed was dominating Wall Street by developing all sorts of financially engineered spiffy nouveau derivative products such as CDOs (Collateralized Debt Obligations), CDSs (Credit Default Swaps) taking too much of risks. There are too many. We only mention here the ones which brought the current mess. The situation was left unregulated by Fed Reserve or US Treasury. Everyone was amazed about Greenspan era. But, during the Fed Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's period market was left to flourish with numerous derivative products without being adequately regulated and the mortgage lenders also went wild. He could not see the forthcoming financial disaster. Bear Stearns investment banker had to write down their defaulted CDOs, and eventually underwent a forced

## Financial Market Turmoil and the Global Impact

sale to JPMorgan Chase in March this year. Lehman Brothers was competing with Goldman Sachs another investment banker. But it failed in the competition and finally went into bankruptcy. Lehman Brothers leveraged their position 35 times its capital. It invested heavily in derivatives. When underlying assets market value started diving down the derivatives in which Lehman Bros invested lost their contract values. Lehman's fall is a downside of using borrowed money. State authorities failed to bailout Lehman Bros. UK based Barclays negotiated but agreed to buy only some divisions of the Lehman Bros. Finally Lehman Bros had to file action under Chapter 11. Judge in the case James Peek said 'Lehman Bros became a victim, in effect the only true icon to fall in the Tsunami that has befallen the credit markets.'

CDS (Credit Default Swaps) is designed to protect investors from failures of the issuers. AIG (American International Group) an insurance company was faced to settle under a CDS \$14 billion overnight, which amount of liquidity in fact they did not have. As similar obligations grew fast within a week, AIG was in a state to settle \$250 billion. So, suddenly they could not 'balance' their books, no way other than to go failing. Finally Uncle Sam (Federal) came to the rescue. While the 700 billion U.S. government bailout plan was being discussed, WaMu (Washington Mutual Bank) was seized by authorities and its assets were sold. This is the first case of US failure to rescue a retail bank. JP Morgan Chase the third largest US bank has bought the WaMu has a heavy burden of writing off \$31 billion loan portfolio - mainly massive amounts of defaulted mortgages of WaMu. Merrill Lynch is another investment giant under pressure and may be taken over by Bank of America in order to avoid bankruptcy action. There is a general believe that Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley will survive the crisis, but Professor Nouriel Roubini says 'they will be gone in a matter of months as well. ...because their business model is fundamentally flawed'. All these actions caused the market to lose confidence. A most successful investor Warren Buffett in 2003 indicated these derivative products as 'weapons of financial mass destruction'. Nobody listened to him.

**Why Bailout Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac?**

Based on the pools of mortgages, major investment banks created CDOs as another invest-



ment product and sold in the market. As assets in the market, the value of the mortgages is double counted. This product gave slightly higher interest rate than traditional US treasury securities. The advocates of the products when initiated are US government supported Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Many of these CDOs were owned and guaranteed by these two federal sponsored organizations. The big reason Fed and the US treasury felt compelled to bailout the failing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac was the fear that if they didn't, foreign investors would not continue the funding of US trade and federal budget deficits. In order to maintain the super economic power status, it is important for the Fed to bridge the annual budget deficits. This is achieved partly with enormous inflow of foreign investments in government issued securities. These are mainly issued in the form of CDOs by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and other notes and bonds issued by US treasury. If Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac fail foreign investors will lose confidence in the US Government and its economy. That's the reason Fed jumped to bail out these two organizations costing tax payers with 300 million dollars.

### Banking System

The \$700 billion U.S. government bailout plan to prop up the creaking banking system by buying banks' bad debts could renew confidence in the U.S. economy and fuel greenback gains. Gaining customers confidence for their deposits and their accessibility in getting lending facilities at lower rate is paramount important to keep the banking system functioning. But it could also spark fears that the package may cost too much, drive up inflation, swell the already bloated U.S. deficit and hurt the ailing economy, analysts said. The \$700 billion is being added as a 7% of the \$9.8 trillion national debt. The dollar value as an international currency

**Arun Senathirajah MBA  
(Banking Mgmt)**

my or market economy is the right one? Now we can see central government is intervening in the market system to bail out the economy. So, it is in other words market economy is also becoming as centralized economy?

### Future Impact

US Congress passed the legislation and authorize government to buy the troubled assets created by home foreclosures from financial institutions. It is expected to restore the confidence in the banking system. Will the \$700 billion rescue plan save the financial system and the economy? It is being commented as 'this is not a bailout for Wall Street, but for the banks in the Main Street'. Unless there is real control of the highly risky derivative products and restrictions over subprime mortgages are brought in, there is no way to regulate the market and economy. But the crime is already committed, bailouts would soothe a little, it is not going to stop the consequences. \$700 billion US tax payers' money will not be a safeguard to the failing financial system. Banks and financial companies around the globe are struggling to pull out themselves out of this crisis. Governments and central bankers are channeling billions of dollars hoping to stabilize the market. But housing market is still a concern. When it is going to be a positive upturn, then there are some hopes to improve the economy. How long it will take? Nobody knows. Much of the future relies on future regulatory measures and funds availability. If remedial actions or bailout fail, financial sector collapse will threaten to plunge the US and much of the world into a deep recession.

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# MOVIE WATCHING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

8 CONTESTANTS, 56 MOVIES, 121 HOURS, THE GUINNESS WORLD RECORD ON THE LINE

Netflix Movie Watching World Championship to Take Place in Times Square from October 2-7.

TORONTO, Jan. 16 / 2008 Canada's No.1 Guinness record breaker Suresh Joachim has been chosen to represent Canada at this movie watching world championship. At stake is the undeniable notoriety associated with holding the title of world champion, a \$10,000 cash prize, a lifetime subscription to Netflix and the first-ever Popcorn Bowl trophy.

Suresh will represent the Tamil people across the world at this world championship. He has asked them to play 5 Tamil movies during the championship and they have agreed to it. Since he will be producing the world fastest movie this December, this competition will help him to acquire many ideas by watching 56 movies.

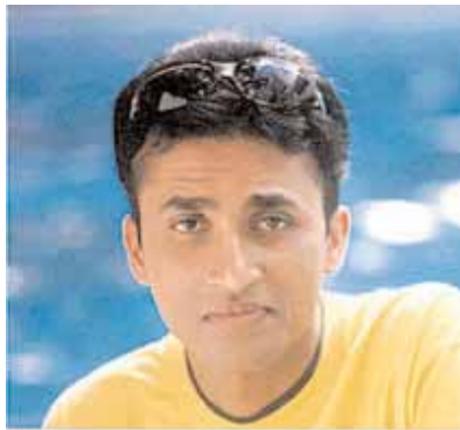
Following are the 5 Tamil movies that will be played:

Sivakaasi, Thiruvilayadal Arambam, Arunachalam, Something Something.....Unnakum Ennakum and Vasool Raja M.B.B.S.

Guinness World Records rules require the contestants to watch films non-stop without averting their eyes from the screen. Competitors will be given 10 minutes between each movie, or approximately every two hours, to refresh themselves. Eating, drinking, standing and stretching are allowed as long as eyes are on the screen. Medical professionals will monitor the contestants' conditions throughout the event and assess if contestants are truly watching or are simply staring blankly at the screen.

Their eyes may be glued to the screen, but all eyes will be on the eight competitors who will participate in the Netflix Movie Watching World Championship: The Quest for the Popcorn Bowl. Hosted by Netflix (NASDAQ: NFLX), the world's largest online movie rental service, the grueling movie watching marathon will begin on October 2nd in New York's Times Square and is expected to last until a new Guinness World Record®, for most consecutive hours spent watching movies, is set five days later on October 7th.

The event will begin at 10:30 a.m.



Eastern time with competitors assuming their positions in the Netflix Movie Watching Arena, a plexi-glass living room in the center of New York's Times Square. Gawkers and passersby will have ample opportunity to cheer on or watch in wonderment as each competitor creatively and, towards the finale, desperately attempts to stave off sleep.

Suresh Joachim's Next Attempt: FASTEST MOVIE SCRIPT TO SCRNING IN 12 DAYS.

STARTING ON DECEMBER 6.00 PM FINISHING AT DECEMBER 20TH 6.00 PM

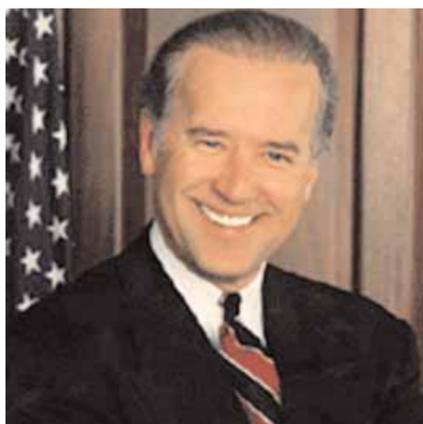
## US Vice Presidential Candidates agree on intervention to stop genocide

"I don't have a stomach for genocide" said US vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph R Biden during the one only live televised debate for the Vice Presidential candidates aired on Thursday Oct 3.

Senator Biden advocated a no-fly zone over Darfur, a major push to get peace-keeper helicopters into Darfur, and a U.S.-led NATO action of some kind. Senator Biden added: "When a country engages in genocide...that country forfeits the right to say, 'you have no right to intervene.'"

Governor Sarah Palin, Republican Party's vice presidential candidate nodded and declared, "We can agree on that." Gov. Palin was less specific but she did clearly say that she favored a no-fly zone in Darfur as well.

A New York Times column commenting on the debate said "Senator Biden broke the tradition of American leaders waffling on genocide over generations in a splendid way when he very forthrightly said during the



debate "I don't have a stomach for genocide.""

The New York Times added that this is a "historical milestone", for candidates of both parties saying forthrightly that they would intervene to stop genocide, "not because of our national interests but because of our national values".

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E&O E

# Monsoon Newsline

## Sri Lanka Political party leader refutes Canadian HC claim as absolute untruth

Dr. Wickramabahu Karunaratne has refuted claims of the Canadian HC that said "his actions constitute membership in the LTTE" as "absolute untruth." He had been invited to Canada to attend as a guest speaker at a conference on the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict, organized by a group of Sri Lankans living in Canada.

Dr. Karunaratne told "Lankadissent" that he handed over his application on 25th August, 2008 well in advance of the conference and wanted only a few days stay in Canada.

In response to Dr Karunaratne's application for visa, a letter from C McKinney, First Secretary, Immigration at the Canadian High Commission in Colombo, has written to Dr Karunaratne to say he fails the admissibility tests laid out in Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) as "it has been reported that you have publicly participated in LTTE activities by personally and knowingly attending and speaking at pro-LTTE events such as Pongu

Tamil in Madrid and in London. In addition, you have publicly announced your support for B.Nadesan. As a prominent member of a political party that has historically and consistently shown support for the LTTE." And therefore is constituted he is a member of the LTTE.

Dr. Karunaratne responding by letter addressed to the First Secretary of the Canadian High Commission in Colombo says, he had never been to Spain and had not attended the "pongu thamil" event in London. In his hard hitting response to the Canadian HC, Dr. Karunaratne says, "if you have any sense of democracy left, please let me know whether I have the right to appeal against your irresponsible and dangerous conclusions."

*[Full text of Dr Karunaratne's reply follows]*

Mr.C McKinney,  
First Secretary, Immigration,  
Canadian High Commission,  
Colombo.

File: V080800395

Dear Mr. McKinney,

Thank you for your letter dated 16 Sep 2008, which I found quite amusing.

Firstly, let me correct some absolute untruths included in your letter. I have never been to Spain; and I could not attend Pongu Tamil meeting in London as I got the British visa after the event.

Secondly, our party is a socialist party that believes in mass actions while the LTTE is a Tamil nationalist bourgeois party that uses the method of terror in the course of the struggle. If you have an iota

of knowledge in political science you will see that I could not be a leader of the New Sama Samaja party and also be a member of the LTTE.

Of course we have defended the right of self determination of the Tamil people and the autonomy for the Tamil home land since 1974. In spite of that, the LTTE has used terror against our party members.

Disregarding that, in common demonstrations that demands



**Dr Vickramabahu Karunaratne (Centre) at a recent rally in front of the Fort Railway Station in Colombo calling to safeguard rights of Journalists in Sri Lanka**

human rights for Tamils we have participated with LTTE supporters. How ever in all such meetings we have stood for voluntary unity of Sinhala and Tamil nationalities.

Thirdly, if you have such credible evidence of my self being a member of the LTTE, I am sure you would have shared that knowledge with the Mahinda regime. It is strange that the government has taken no action what so ever. Your ludicrous claim is not taken seriously even by this chauvinist war mongering govern-

ment. Finally if you have any sense of democracy left, please let me know whether I have the right to appeal against your irresponsible and dangerous conclusions.

Sgd: Dr Vickramabahu Karunaratne, President, Left Front, General Secretary, New Sama Samaja party 17 Barracks Lane, Colombo 2 [Lankadissent.com]

## House for Sale

12 Bed house in 24 perches, adjoining with 20 perch bare land is for sale in Mt. Lavinia, Sri Lanka.

Situated between St Thomas and Mt. Lavinia hotel, Sri Lanka. There are 10 bed rooms with attached hot water washrooms can be used as 4 separate units (Two 4 B/R) (Two 2 B/R). 7ft wall all around, two rolling gates facing two road frontages. Main line drainage connection, Tube well, Over head tank, 7000 sq ft. UDA approved building area for commercial purposes etc, Currently run as a tourist board approved guest house.

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**aglx13@ukgateway.net (London, UK)**

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Previously Known as Ocean Blick Hotel

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**T. Gunaseelan: 416-439-6519**

# Monsoon Newsline

## Sri Lanka Aims to Meet Asia's Demand for Technology Graduates

By Ron Corben

Sri Lanka hopes to take advantage of the growing regional demand for information technology graduates. A new training institute opens next year to provide skilled graduates to meet increasing demand.

On the outskirts of the Sri Lankan capital Colombo, construction is fast progressing on a new \$5.7 million information technology and management institute.

The institute, at Malabe, sits in a new industrial park for information technology businesses. The institute is the dream of veteran Sri Lankan businessman, Neville Fernando

Fernando, who personally financed the institute, says language courses are key to the institute's program, so that graduates will be able to work for multinational companies.

"So what we teaching will be IT-related subjects, even the English language course. All this will be IT-based so that they work in any IT factory anywhere in the world. Even Korean, Japanese, Chinese will be taught because in

the Asian region there is a lot of demand for IT technicians," he said.

Mr. Fernando hopes the institute will allow more young Sri Lankans to stay at home to study, instead of going abroad. The campus will have space for 1,000 students, and will offer classes in business administration, communications technology, and management in areas such as tourism.

Vickum Senanayake is the Sri Lanka country chief for the U.S. technology company Oracle. He says the number of technology graduates each year falls short of demand.

"Our need is around 20,000 graduates coming out of the university and various other tertiary education institutes. But we produce maybe about a maximum 3,000, 5,000 in the IT sector," he said.

Senanayake says there also is a gap between the skills needed and the training offered at existing schools. He says the IT industry has been grappling with these problems for more than five years.

An even bigger problem is

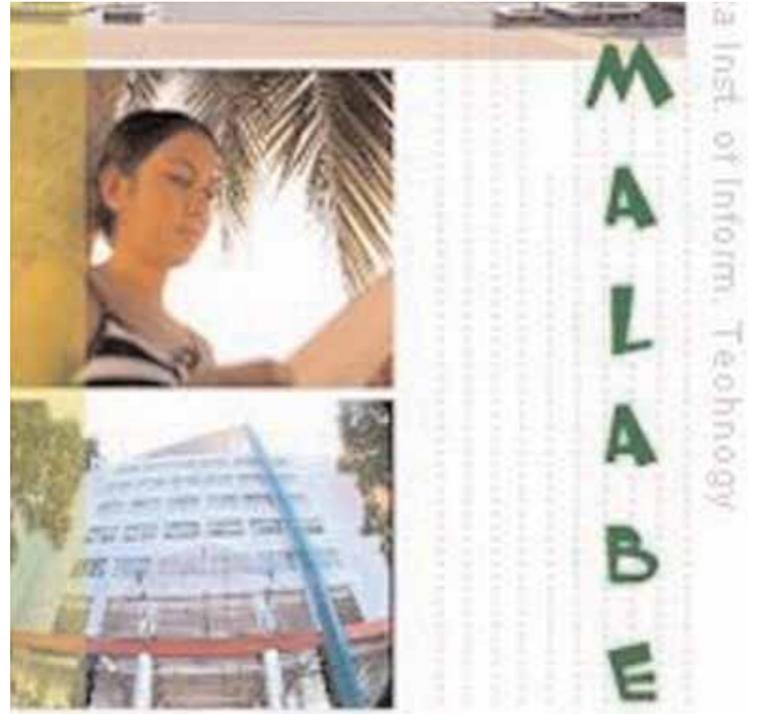
persuading graduates to stay in Sri Lanka, instead of seeking jobs in other countries.

"It is a huge concern not just for Oracle but the industry as a whole. People who get skilled up are quite valuable to the industry and we keep losing these people to the region or the West mostly and lots of skilled migration," he said.

The dean of the new institute's information technology faculty, Chandima de Silva, thinks the school will go a long way toward meeting demand in Sri Lanka. But, he says, India will remain a draw for many graduates.

"In terms of India as a destination for employment I do not think Sri Lanka or any other Asian country can match. There are thousands of jobs demands in India. Our institute can cater to that in time to come. But in terms of education alone Sri Lankan parents might still opt to send their children to a good institution in Sri Lanka. So I think it would be a landmark in Sri Lankan education," he said.

Businesswoman Geetha Karandawala says the institute



comes at an opportune time in Sri Lanka's IT development.

"People are beginning to see particularly the IT-related career pathways and Sri Lanka because of its language skills and I think it is a very good area for future employment and career development. If the timing is right then the project works and I think the timing is right now for this kind of

project," she said.

Sri Lanka is gaining attention from international companies looking to invest in its IT sector. One international bank already plans to set up a support office in Sri Lanka to take advantage of the country's English-speaking workers and trained technical staff.

[VOA]

## Sri Lanka accused of using "food as weapon"



TRO lorry & IDPs-TRO is the only organization working in the conflict zones assisting IDPs to move to safer areas

Food for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) allowed to trickle in for now by Sri Lanka.

A U.N. convoy of 51 vehicles carrying 800 metric tonnes of food aid crossed the Omanthai checkpoint, the north of which is LTTE-held territory, on October 2 and was due to deliver food to four areas east of Kilinochchi where most of the refugees are.

Food deliveries have been facing denials for the past several weeks at Sri Lanka military checkpoints.

It originally had 60 trucks, but the number was reduced after the

military had found explosives and other contraband inside nine of the vehicles, the U.N. said.

The U.N. said it "condemned the attempt by persons unknown to disrupt the aid effort" by placing the illegal cargo on trucks provided by the government.

Tamil daily Uthayan reported, "only food sufficient for one week is being allowed", quoting UN sources.

Several Tamil dailies and humanitarian agencies have condemned Sri Lanka government's use of "food as weapon" in its "onslaught on the Tamil region".

## Amnesty International urges full probe of attack on Human Rights Lawyer in Sri Lanka

The London based Amnesty International (AI) has urged the authorities to conduct a full probe into the attack on leading human rights lawyer in Sri Lanka, J.C. Weliamuna and bring those responsible to justice.

AI urged the authorities to protect J.C. Weliamuna and his family, who survived a grenade attack on September 27, using all measures deemed appropriate by J.C. Weliamuna himself.

It also asked the authorities to ensure that human rights defenders are able to continue their legitimate work without fear of

harassment or intimidation.

Human rights lawyer J.C. Weliamuna has gone into hiding since the incident as he remains at risk of further attack, AI said.

The grenade attack came at 11.40pm as J. C. Weliamuna, his wife and two sons, aged 2 years and the other 2 months old, were asleep. The grenade exploded on the balcony of their bedroom though luckily they were not harmed.

However, the explosion caused extensive damage to their home. Police found a second, unexploded grenade in the com-

pound of the house and which they managed to defuse.

J.C. Weliamuna is the head of the Sri Lankan branch of Transparency International, an international NGO which campaigns against government corruption.

On September 23, the NGO published a report naming Sri Lanka as 92nd out of the list of 184 corrupt governments around the world. He also represents a number of citizens, who claim that state officials have violated their "fundamental human rights" under the Sri Lankan Constitution.



**Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Karunanidhi's daughter Kanimoli, who is an M.P. in the Lok Sabha, is handing over a letter of protest from Karunanidhi regarding Sri Lankan Navy's shooting of Tamil Nadu Fishermen....**

Picture Courtesy: Hindu

# Monsoon Features

## Temples Where Gods Come to Life

By Edward Wong

THE god was ready for his night of conjugal bliss. The priests of the temple, muscular, shirtless men with white sarongs wrapped around their thighs, bore the god's palanquin on their shoulders. They marched him slowly along a stone corridor shrouded in shadows to his consort's shrine. Drumbeats echoed along the walls. Candles flickered outside the doorway to the shrine's inner sanctum. There, Meenakshi, the fish-eyed goddess, awaited the embrace of her husband, Sundareshwarar, an incarnation of that most priapic of Indian gods, Shiva.

Along with hundreds of Indians clustered around the shrine entrance, I strained to get a glimpse of the statue of Sundareshwarar, but green cloths draped over the palanquin kept it hidden. Worshipers surged forward in mass delirium, snapping photos with their cellphones, bowing to the palanquin and chanting hymns. They stretched out their hands to touch the carriage. Priests ordered them back.

Then the priests veered into the inner sanctum, carrying the unseen god toward the eager arms of his wife. They too had a night of divine pleasure ahead of them, so we were all ushered out as the guards began locking up.

This union of Meenakshi and Sundareshwarar is a nightly ritual in Madurai, the largest city in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, drawing feverish crowds of Hindu devotees. In much of India, the gods are not creatures of distant myth to be worshiped as abstractions. They exist in our world, in our time, and are fully integrated into the daily lives of Hindu believers. They move simultaneously through the world of the divine and the world that we inhabit, and are

subject to all the emotions and experiences that we humans are all too familiar with - including carnal desire.

Few things in India express the continuous presence of the gods better than the ancient, massive temple complexes of Tamil Nadu. Walk through any city there and what catches your eye first are the soaring temple entrances known as gopuras, sacred skyscrapers decorated with a phantasmagoria of Hindu statues of multi-armed, bug-eyed gods, mythical beasts and chiseled warriors. Thousands of such statues adorn the largest gopuras, like the ones rising from the Meenakshi-Sundareshwarar temple in Madurai, one of the holiest pilgrimage sites in India.

"Here, we have a proverb: 'Where there is a temple, people can live,'" said Ram Kumar, a guide I had hired in Madurai. "The temple is the center of a person's living space."

Though Kerala, the state just to the west, draws larger tourist crowds, Tamil Nadu is an increasingly popular destination. One of India's most developed states, it also has beaches and lush farmland, and its cuisine is among the most flavorful - and hottest - in India.

But it is the temple circuit that is the main draw, as it has been for centuries. Indeed, many of Tamil Nadu's residents see the state as a repository of "pure" Hindu culture. In many ways, it is a country within a country, proudly preserving its ancient Dravidian culture, most noticeably in the widespread use of the Tamil language.

I had been to India four times, but never to the south, so I had little idea of what to expect in December, when I flew with my friend Tini into Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu. We were met by a driver from a hotel



A Hindu shrine in Madurai



Making tea in front of a cafe in Mahabalipuram



Students study at a school for Hindu priests in Tamil Nadu



A sculptor works in Mahabalipuram, the stone-sculpturing capital of India. Likenesses of major Hindu gods like Shiva, Vishnu and Ganesh roll out of these workshops and into homes and offices around the country



Worshippers and observers at the ritual of Meenakshi and Sundareshwarar in Madurai

in Mahabalipuram, a beach town 36 miles south. He whisked us into an Ambassador, those grand 1950s-style sedans ubiquitous throughout India, and off we went, veering past cows, motor rickshaws and overcrowded buses.

The chaos of India - sometimes the very quality that draws me there - wasn't quite what I needed on this vacation. For a moment, as we were flying through the insane traffic, I had second thoughts about the whole trip.

Then we pulled into Mahabalipuram; I could see the ocean as we cruised into town. There was the smell of salt in the air, and we drove through quiet lanes to the seaside hotel. The beach there is not of the golden-sand-and-swaying-palms kind you find in Goa or Kerala, but it is a pretty stretch to walk along and unwind from sightseeing (think fishing skiffs and seafood restaurants).

It is the town's stone architecture, some of the oldest in India, that makes Mahabalipuram a good first stop on the temple crawl. Biking between temples seemed the most

relaxed way of taking in the sights, so off we went to a set of mini-temples on the southern edge of town. The place was already crowded with Indian tourists and juice vendors standing next to carts piled high with green coconuts.

The ancient site was designed to be a big outdoor showroom that exhibited the skills of the town's architects. Incredibly, the set of temples, the Five Rathas, was carved from a single large slab of granite: models in the Dravida style.

As I pedaled north, I heard the chiseling of stone coming from roadside workshops - a sound I would hear throughout the day - reminding me that Mahabalipuram is still the stone-sculpturing capital of India, just as it was in ancient times. Likenesses of major Hindu gods like Shiva, Vishnu and Ganesh roll out of these workshops and into homes and offices around the country.

I stopped in at a few of the workshops, where men sat on the floor chiseling. They were creating statues of Hindu gods and of Buddha in vari-

ous poses: Buddha reclining, Buddha meditating beneath the bodhi tree, Buddha's head. At one workshop, I held up a statuette of Ganesh, the elephant-headed god. He was typing on a laptop.

"Computer companies like to buy these," the manager said.

This was India: the modern alongside the classically ancient.

By the crashing waves of the Bay of Bengal sits the town's most important architectural site, the Shore Temple. My Rough Guide said the Shore Temple was built in the early eighth century during the Pallava dynasty and is considered the earliest stone temple in the south. Its two towers were modest compared with some of the gopuras I would later see, but the style - a layered, wedding-cake look whose sharp edges have been eroded by the seaside weather - had enormous influence on the development of later temples both in India and in Southeast Asia. The corncob towers of the beautiful Angkor complex in Cambodia, built by the Hindu Khmer rulers, are one example.

Perhaps the most beautiful piece of art in Mahabalipuram, though, lies in the heart of town, an open-air bas relief known as Arjuna's Penance. Dozens of figures from Hindu mythology are carved from the surface of an enormous granite boulder.

The central scenes depict a well-known tale from the Mahabharata - that of the revered warrior Arjuna turning ascetic and going into the forest to seek the aid of Shiva in a coming battle. Tourists were kept far from the rock by a rail, but monkeys clambered all over it, just like the forest creatures in the mythological scene.

HEADING south from Mahabalipuram, Tini and I hopped on a bus to Pondicherry, the former French colonial town. It was a good stop for dining and some new boutique hotels, but it did not have much in the way of grand temples.

So we hired a car to reach the temple of Gangaikondacholapuram, a few hours' drive southwest, where the detailed statues and friezes from the Chola dynasty are as remarkable as the temple's name. What astounded me were the demon-protector statues flanking each doorway, towering over me, snarling at me with fanged teeth, telling me in a not-too-subtle way that I didn't belong here.

The drive to the temple had taken us deep into the Tamil Nadu countryside, past the electric-green rice fields of the Cauvery Delta. Storms broke out as we were leaving the temple, but I didn't mind. It all seemed part of the landscape, these rains that would bring a harvest for the farmers making a living the same way their ancestors had done thousands of years ago.

Eager for a roof over our heads, we told our driver to head for Thanjavur, where I hoped to see the finest surviving works of the Cholas, who ruled a large swath of south India from this city.

The downpour was ceaseless, continuing through the night and the next day. I spent my first morning in Thanjavur looking at marvelous bronze statues in the Royal Palace compound. The famous bronze depiction of Nataraja, lord of the dance, standing in a ring of fire, strands of the cosmos swirling from his head, was created during the Chola dynasty and has since been replicated endlessly.

Contd. in Pg 29

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# Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce Holds 1st Golf Classic at the Silver Lakes Golf and Country Club

**By: Krishni Loganathan**

The weather was perfect for the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce 1st Golf Classic that was held on Wednesday September 10th at the beautiful Silver Lakes Golf and Country Club in Newmarket. Many people joined together to enjoy the great day of golf, some being first timers and others more experienced.

It would have seemed as if business was closed or at least on pause for the day as many bank managers, lawyers, doctors, real estate agents and many others came ready to play for the 1st Golf Classic hosted by the CTCC. Many golfers were up for the challenge of taking the first place trophy, but only one team could claim it. The lucky, but talented first place winners included the team of NJ, Shaffin, Sarfaraz Dayaz, and M. Sundin, receiving the first place Challenge Trophy from CTCC and a golf package allowing them a free pass back to the course for another year that was sponsored by Silver Lakes. Tying in second place was the team TVI/CMR along with The Co-operators. Unfortunately due to a term "retrogradation" (opposite to the usual order) the TVI/CMR team managed to pull through to second place, leaving The Co-operators at third place.

As the golfers finished their 18 holes they lined up one by one to face the Putting Challenge. This was another chance to join the winners circle. There could only be one winner and that was Grant McAllister from the team The Co-operators. The Co-operators were winning many of the trophies at this tournament including the trophy for Closest to the Hole, which was won by team leader Senthoooran Punithavel. The longest drive competition was won by Nigel Samaroo, Branch Manager for Scotiabank located at Cederbrae Mall.

There were many hole sponsors that should be pointed out beginning with TD Canada Trust, Scotiabank, RBC Royal Bank of Canada, Business Development Bank of Canada, Meridian, The Co-operators, Suntharalingam & Associates, The Law Office of Gary Anandasangaree, and TVI/CMR. Also a supply of Golf balls for the tournament were donated by Customer President John Gilespi of Pizzaville and other prizes were donated by Sinnadurai Jeyakumar, Hertz car rental and Asiyan.

After the long day of golf, the evening closed with prizes for the winners and a scrumptious steak dinner. The day was eventful and talks about next years tournament was already in the works, as many of the golfers could be heard of refining their skills before the next tournament.

**Photos by: Ken Photo & Gnane**



Putting Challenge Competition winner, Grant McAllister receives Award from Scarborough Town Centre Branch Manager Mano Thillainathan



NJ Team receives the Challenge Cup Winners Trophy from Dr. Giri



Scotiabank Cederbrae branch Manager Nigel receiving the longest drive competition award from Shamala Kumar of TD CanadaTrust



2nd Price winners (TVI) receives award from Kanish Thevarajah as President Gary Anandasangaree makes the announcements



Senthoooran of Co-Operators receiving prize for closest to the hole competition from South Asian Market Vice President for RBC, Imtiaz Seyid



RBC team with CTCC President Gary



Co-Operators Team



Scotiabank Team



Jeyakumar team with Ken kirupa and other members



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## OAK RIDGES-MARKHAM

"I grew up in Markham and now live in Ballantrae with my wife and daughter. Serving as Chief of Staff to Ontario's first Commissioner of Alternative Energy and the Chair of the Red Tape Reduction Commission gave me the experience I need to represent you effectively in government. Being a small business person with a young family makes me better able to represent you in our community."  
*Paul Calandra*

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AUTHORIZED BY THE OFFICIAL AGENT

## ABOUT PAUL CALANDRA

Paul Calandra is a hard working, practical conservative who grew up in Markham before settling on the family farm in Ballantrae, where he now lives with his wife Melanie and daughter Natalie (and their dog Phoebe).

Paul first engaged in the political process when he was only nine years old, delivering literature in his neighbourhood. His passion grew over the years and since then Paul has continued to work tirelessly to elect like-minded Conservatives to office at the Municipal, Provincial and Federal level. Most recently, Paul served as Campaign Manager in two federal elections and three provincial elections. He also served as a regional organizer for Stephen Harper's Leadership Campaign and Jim Flaherty's Provincial PC Leadership Campaign.

After completing full-time university studies, Paul opened and successfully operated two small businesses and managed a commercial, residential and agricultural real estate portfolio.

In 1995 Paul accepted a position with the Mike Harris government where he served as Chief of Staff to MPP Steve Gilchrist, former Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing, Chair of the Red Tape Commission and first Commissioner of Alternative Energy. His time in provincial government gave Paul the experience needed to become an effective Member of Parliament.

Currently, Paul works as a Commercial Insurance Broker in York Region.

Paul continues to serve the Conservative Party as a Member of the Board of the Oak-Ridges Markham Conservative Association and as Past-President of the Oak Ridges-Markham Provincial P.C Association.

Paul also served as a member on the Board of: The Toronto Children's Safety Village, The Integrated Shoreline Management Plan, The Manson Environmental Review Committee, Highland Creek Heritage Day Advisory Committee, and Oak Ridges Trail Association.

KEY ISSUES OF  
CONSERVATIVE  
PARTY OF  
CANADA UNDER  
HARPER  
LEADERSHIP  
2008

- LEADERSHIP
- ACCOUNTABILITY
- CHILD CARE
- SOVEREIGNTY
- TACKLING CRIME
- LOWER TAXES
- HEALTH CARE
- ENVIRONMENT



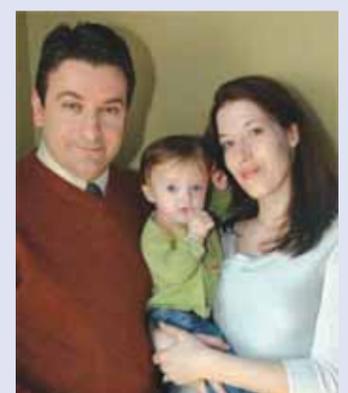
Paul and Prime Minister Hon. Stephen Harper



Paul with Federal Labour Minister Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn



Paul with Federal Finance Minister Hon. Jim Flaherty



Paul with his wife Melanie and daughter Natalie

# Monsoon Feature

## Canada Parliamentary Structure & Federal Elections - An in-depth analysis

By: Raymond Rajabalan

### Parliamentary Hill - Canada's Parliament

Canadian Parliamentary Structure is made up of the following:

#### A) Queen of Canada

The Queen of England is represented in Canada by the Governor General.

The incumbent Governor General is, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean.

#### B) Senate

Members of the Senate are appointed by the Governor



Sir John A. Macdonald

General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

#### C) House of Commons

Members of the House of Commons are chosen by eligible citizens through federal elections.

#### Formation of Canada

On March 29, 1867, Queen Victoria signed the British North American Act and in July 1st the same year, it came into effect. A new nation was born, Canada consisting of 3.5 million people and four provinces.

The Original four charter members of Confederation were as follows:

#### New Brunswick

#### Nova Scotia

#### Ontario

#### Quebec

On the 16th of July this new country was named the Dominion of Canada.

In the first election held in 1867, Sir John A. Macdonald, the leader of the Conservative Party won a working majority and became the first Prime Minister.

#### The Number of General Elections.

The general election to be held on October 14th, 2008 will be the 40th election within the past 141 years since the formation of Canada.

#### The growth of the number of Electorates

At the first election after the confederation in 1867, Canada



Agnes Macphail - First Woman Elected to House of Commons

had 181 members in the House of Commons. The number increased to 301 during the Federal elections in 2000. Since then the number increased to 308 during 2004 June elections and continues to remain unchanged up to now..

#### Province with the most number of electorates

The Province of Ontario has 106 electorates, which is the largest number for any of the provinces, territories in the whole of Canada. Only the party which obtains the most number of electorates will be able to form the Federal Government.



Governor Genral of Canada - Michelle Jean

Electorates with the least geographical and most geographical areas.

Laurie-Sainte-Marie electorate in Quebec has an area of only 9 square kilo meters.

The electorate with the largest geographical area in Nunavut. This electorate in the North West Territories region has area of 3,111, 463 square kilometers.

#### Voting rights for women

In 1918, the franchise at Federal elections was extended to all women of 21 years of age and over. During the following year women became eligible for elections to the House of Commons. The first woman Member elected was Agnes Macphail of the progressive Party in 1921.

#### Change in the voting age

In 1970, a newly revised Canada election Act, lowered the voting age and the minimum age

to be candidate from 21 years to 18.

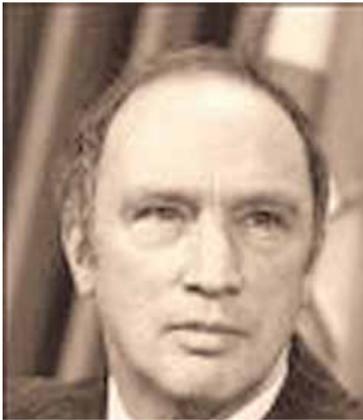
#### Voter Turnout

Voter turnout at the 2004 June Federal election was (60.9%) percent which was the lowest since 1896.

The highest turnout in Canadian history was (79.4%) percent, that was received at the General elections of 1958, when John A Diefenbaker's Government was re-elected.

#### Closest Results of any Federal election in Canada

One of the closest election results of any federal election in



Pierre Elliot Trudeau

Canada and Atlantic Canada - Facts & Figures

#### Ontario

##### Long serving Ontario MP

John Graham Haggard (Conservative) served 41 years from 1872 to 1913.

##### Youngest Ontario MP

Patrick O'Sullivan (Progressive Conservative) elected 1972 at the



Monique Begin- First female MP from Quebec

age of 20 years.

##### Ontario's first female MP.

Agnes MacPhail (Progressive United Farmer's of Ontario elected 1921.

##### Ontario's Prime Ministers

Lester Pearson (Liberal) 1963 to 1968

vative) 1984 to 1993

**Pierre Elliot Trudeau** (Liberal) 1968-1979, 1980-1984.

**Louis St.Laurent.** (Liberal) 1948 to 1957

**Wilfred Laurier** (Liberal) 1896 to 1911.

##### Western Canada

**Longest serving Western MP**

**John Diefenbaker** (Conservative, Progressive Conservative.) Served 39 years from 1940 to 1979

##### Youngest MP from West

**Lorne Nostrum** (NDP) Elected 1968 at the age of 22 years.

##### First Western female MP

**Doris Winifred Nielson** (Unity Party) Elected 1940

##### Western Prime Ministers

**Kim Campbell** (Progressive Conservative) 1993 to 1993.

**John Turner** (Liberal) 1964 to 1984

**Joe Clarke** (Progressive Conservative) 1979 to 1980

**John Diefenbaker** (Progressive Conservative) 1957 to 1963

**Stephen Harper** (Conserva-

Period	Party	Prime Minister	Period in Power
1957-1958	Progressive Conservative	John Diefenbaker	5 Months
1962-1963	Progressive Conservative	John Diefenbaker	6 Months
1963-1965	Liberal	Lester B. Pearson	2 Years 4 Months
1965-1968	Liberal	Lester B. Pearson	2 Years 4 Months
1972-1974	Liberal	Pierre E. Trudeau	5 Months
1979-1980	Conservative	Joe Clark	6 Months
2004-2005	Liberal	Paul Martin	1 Year 6 Months
2006-2008	Conservative	Stephen Harper	2 Years 8 Months

Canada occurred in 1972, when the Liberals led by Pierre Eliot Trudeau won 109 seats and the progressive Conservatives led by Robert Stanefield obtained 107 seats.

#### Provinces and Territories of Canada

##### Province of Ontario

##### Province of Quebec

##### Western Canada: 4

##### Provinces and 3 Territories

##### Four Provinces

##### British Columbia

##### Alberta

##### Saskatoon

##### Manitoba

##### North West Territories

##### West Arctic

##### Nunavut

##### Yukon

##### Atlantic Canada

##### New Brunswick

##### Nova Scotia

##### Prince Edward Islands.

##### New Foundland and Labrador

Ontario, Quebec, Western

**William Lyon McKenzie King** (Liberal) 1921 to 1930, 1935 to 1948.

**Sir John A McDonald** (Liberal, Conservative) 1867, 1873, 1878, 1891.

**Alexander McKenzie** (Liberal) 1873 to 1878

##### Quebec

##### Longest serving Quebec MP

Wilfred Laurier (Liberal) Served 45 years from (1874 to 1919)

##### Youngest Quebec MP

Claude Andre' Lachance (Liberal)

Elected 1974 at the age of 20 years

##### First female MP of Quebec

Monique Begin (Liberal) Elected 1972

##### Quebec Prime Ministers

**Paul Martin** (Liberal) 2003 to 2005

**Jean Chrétien** (Liberal) 1993 to 2003

**Brian Mulroney** (Conser-

ative) 2006 to 2008

**Atlantic Canada** (Eastern Canada)

**Longest serving Eastern MP**

(Liberal, Conservative, Liberal)

**John Costigan** Served 40 years from 1867 to 1907

##### First Eastern Woman MP

**Margaret Mary Macdonald** (Progressive Conservative)

Elected 1961.

##### Eastern Prime Minsters

Robert Laird Borden (Conservative, Unionist) 1911 to 1920

**Charles Tupper** (Conservative). 1896 to 1896

##### Minority Governments

In the past 50 years Canada has had eight minority Governments. In 1957-1958, 1962-1963, 1963-1965, 1965-1968, 1972-1974, 1979-1980, 2004-2005 and 2006-2008.

# Monsoon Features

## The Destiny of Canada is in Your Hands

"Until someone some day achieves a majority, the fight is not won or lost" said Steven Harper on the Election Day night on June 28th, 2004. It now appears that the fight will be over and the end is near.

The warm -north east winds blowing with the world's media from south of the border, is carrying a substantial influence from the U.S presidential election campaign to ours. The 40th Canadian parliamentary election is scheduled to take place on 14th October 2008, after the 12th minority government that was elected and formed almost three years ago was dissolved on 9th September 2008. One week prior to the announcement, the Prime Minister, requested that the Governor General postpone her state visit to China and stated to the nation that there might be an early election.

There are some interesting contributing factors that helped the government determine the timing of the election: before the US presidential election, at the early part of a global recession, somewhat slow moving war in Afghanistan and Iraq led by the United States coalition forces, skyrocketing oil prices and the adamant policy of the OPEC nations in not increasing crude oil production, the Russian invasion of Georgia, coupled with the unimpressive captain sailing the Liberal Party ship. Hopefully on the 14th of October, we will crown the captain of if not a majority government, at least a minority government with more members of parliament in the ruling party.

Many Canadians did not get a better opportunity than the last minority government to know, measure, and gauge the leadership qualities of Mr. Harper. He is a leader who says what he means and does what he says. His track record in the last government is well proven in the following examples.

First of all he promised to reduce the GST by 2%, whereas former Prime Minister Jean Chretien campaigned against Mr. Brian Mulroney saying that once he was elected as Prime Minister he would remove it and until the last day the Liberals were in power, never had it revoked. Another case in point: all of the G8 countries were not able to balance their budgets and had gone into deficit except Canada which had both a balanced budget and surpluses. This is due to the prudent management of Finance Minister Mr. Jim Flaherty under the leadership of Harper.

The heavy right of landing fee for sponsored relatives of immigrants to Canada and skilled workers levied by the Liberal govern-

ment was reduced to \$ 490.00 from \$975.00 as per the election agenda. This has lifted a substantial burden from the shoulders of new immigrants who are an invaluable resource to our economy.

The protection of our Northern border was one of the top priority items in the election manifesto when many of us were not aware of its importance. After the discovery of oil and minerals in this region, the USA, Russia, and Denmark became very keen in claiming their rights over this cold, remote place. As promised, he has done it. The reduction of our national debt by over \$ 30 billion during an economic slowdown and in the wake of an uncertain American economy that buys almost 80 % our exports has helped us realize the true vision of Harper.

Afghanistan is very controversial issue for the NDP, not for the sons and daughters of the soil. The Canadian involvement in Afghanistan was initiated by the Liberals and continued by the Conservatives. This is unavoidable for various reasons such as: Canada can not isolate itself from the rest of the world and have the same strength and protection, second factor is that Canada may become the next target for the same rebels who rally against America and the United Kingdom. Osama bin Laden has already targeted Canada because of our exporting of more crude oil to United States of America than any other oil exporting country. I salute all the Canadian soldiers who have sacrificed their lives for our country in Afghanistan. I believe that what they have done today, will certainly protect us in the future and they will be remembered forever with honour and dignity.

Canada's current relationship with the United States might be viewed as close, but not dancing to the tune of the American piper. It is both the internal and, mostly at this time, the external circumstances that prevails in our foreign policy: current threats, world economic slowdown and its effect in Canada and so forth. Harper was not supportive of the American missile defense policy in relation to having Canadian air space for it. He was able to receive a portion of the import duty levied and collected back and made America relax the import restrictions that were attempted by Jean Chretien and Paul Martin had failed miserably. Eventually, the economy is going to supersede the rest of the major factors, climate change, global warming and a cleaner environment are also very important but they are plans destined for the far future and do not directly touch the day to day lives of ordinary people the way the economy does.



With the recent collapse of a major financial institution in the USA and the mad scrambling of other financial institutions, the global economy has been in a state of panic. It will certainly take at least a year to get back on a more sure footing. This will also have an adverse effect in Canada, because of the income generated from exports accounts for 80% of our total export income and many companies and financial institutions have a strong hold in the USA. A troubled stock market, uncertain capital investments, the protective measures that financial institutions are planning to take will certainly be a new development in the USA and Canada and this will have an effect in both the American and Canadian elections. Of course voters will have to look into the economic policies, plans and the capabilities of the leaders. This will determine the final outcome of both elections.

I appreciate the minority government of Harper paying down the government debt by over 30 billion dollars in a short period of time and the reduction in interest that we pay from our taxes. We cannot pass the burden to the next generation as it is unfair. It may not catch the eyes of the masses, but it is certainly a move that keeps the shape of the economy better.

Harper is a man of principle; he will not compromise his vision with any adjustments, or deviating to please anyone. This was evident at the British Commonwealth Summit held in Pakistan in 2008. He expressed concern regarding the democratic rights of Pakistanis and its human rights violations whereas the US president praised the Pakistani president with flowery words. On another occasion, many of the western Presidents and Prime Ministers took time to attend the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing. He was involved with other important matters and did not attend. He has been advocating and fighting against human rights violations around the world, and will continue to fight in many other areas so far untouched. I appreciate

his boldness, integrity and determination.

Family values among many urban Canadian families, irrespective of their ethnicity are deteriorating and it has paved the way for broken families, the melting of mutual trust, drug abuse and alcoholism. Not having enough quality time with the family is a social problem that leads to an unbalanced life which in turn affects productivity and societal cohesion. Harper is married with children and spends reasonable time with his family and advocates for balanced community and family lives in Canadian society... Although the results of the time and the resources spent on it cannot be measured in terms of money, and the resulting happiness is more an abstract idea, it certainly makes sense for all of us.

He has won the trust of many Canadians by fulfilling most of his election promises, in a minority government, where the opposition parties obstructed the passing of bills, compared with some of the previous majority governments. Some political leaders are very generous in making wonderful but unrealistic promises and after the election allow them to blow in the wind. Some Canadians have told me openly during my provincial election campaign that they would not cast their votes to any politician at all because they do not do what they promise and why should they "waste their vote". These frustrated ones are few in number but there is a message in this for all of us. In past Canadian elections, the actual number of voters who cast ballots in percentage is: 1986- 73%, 1917-90%, 2004-60.5%, 2006-64.7%. The confidence that people have in a leader matters a lot any election. Unlike Australia for example, in Canada voting is a right under the law but it is not mandatory to cast a vote. Rights and responsibilities are two sides of the same coin. The public gets the government that they deserve, even when they do not cast their vote. In today's election, amongst the leaders who are able to form the government Harper

### Samy Appadurai

takes a lead...

Sovereignty of Quebec and national unity are both delicate issues and need to be handled with extra care. Brian Mulroney put out a wonderful effort in keeping Canada intact but Mr. Chretien did so more diplomatically and narrowly kept the unity of Canada intact by less than a full percentage in the 1995 referendum. Harper has recognized Quebec as a nation within a united Canada, instead of Quebec as a distinguished society, without any constitutional changes and this has boosted the morale of Quebecers.

Harper is a man of integrity, foresight and gratitude and he is never worried about the consequences of taking bold steps. Some examples include his apology to the Chinese Canadian community for the discriminative head tax which was collected between 1885 and 1923, to Canada's First Nations peoples for the adverse effects of the residential school system, and the 1914 Komagata Maru incident in which hundreds of Indians were turned back from the Vancouver Harbour.

Canada needs more skilled immigrants to fill the gap in the natural declining birth rate and the current immigration standards have to be more flexible and accommodating towards both skilled workers and internationally trained professionals. These people have the education and experience required, but the system as it currently stands does not allow these new immigrants to fully realize their potential for many years. This leads to frustration, anger and in some cases repatriation to their former country. One of the main reasons is because they could not find employment in their field. We are all aware of taxi drivers who were once doctors. We cannot continue to allow this to happen as immigrants are a valuable asset to our communities.

The government of Mr. Harper appears to be very concerned about this issue and is committed to monitoring this situation in collaboration with all of the provincial governments to best determine the appropriate changes and amendments to our existing immigration policy.

In closing, this is not a time for "experiments". We must elect a leader who can sail the ship in a globally disturbed ocean and act with confidence, charisma and most of all prudence. The end, I assure you, is near.

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

# Monsoon Features

## Temples where Gods come to life

Contd. from Page 22

The next morning, with the rain lessening, I went to the Brihadishwara Temple, the most jaw-dropping architectural achievement of the Cholas. The impressive scale of it was apparent as soon as I walked past the temple's pet elephant in the outer courtyard and toward the interior. The vimana, the tower above the inner sanctum, rises 216 feet into the air and is topped with an 81-ton-ball of stone. One theory says that the builders used a 3.5-mile-long elevated plank to roll the ball to the top.

As I peered at the thousands of statues decorating the tower, pilgrims streamed into the compound, many going into the inner sanctum to be blessed by the priests and to gaze on the 10-foot-tall black lingam. In appearance, a lingam is essentially a big phallus. It is the most common representation of Shiva - the destroyer, the transformer, the god who embodies both life and the negation of life - at temples across India.

Male pilgrims draped in orange robes shuffled past us to stand in front of the lingam. Many were Shaivites, easily recognized by three white lines drawn on their foreheads. I saw them everywhere in Tamil Nadu, including at the Meenakshi-Sundareshwarar temple in Madurai, my final stop. I stood by the bathing tank in the courtyard outside the Meenakshi shrine, watching as pilgrims dunked their heads or entire bodies into the water, a scene repeated at rivers, lakes and pools all across India. A massive, brightly painted gopura rose above each of the four entrances to the temple, the 12 towers visible for miles around. The tallest, above the south entrance, was more than 150 feet tall.

Madurai is one of the most ancient cities in India, so it is only fitting that at the center of its teeming bazaars stands what some call the most magnificent temple complex on the subcontinent. It is actually two temples joined, one dedicated to Meenakshi and the other to her husband, Sundareshwarar. Unlike many temples in India, the female god is the dominant one here.

"This temple is a special one," said Mr. Kumar, my guide. "You feel it as soon as you walk in." At least 15,000 visitors come each day. That afternoon, pilgrims kept pouring in. Mr. Kumar said many had temporarily left behind their material lives - jobs as software engineers, rickshaw drivers, whatever - to spend weeks walking to these temples barefoot and in robes. That night, when I went to see the ceremony that would bring about the union of the husband-and-wife gods, the pilgrims were there as well, bearing witness to the holy coupling. They believed the gods had given them life. But it was, in fact, they who - through their devotion, through their journeys to these great temples - were breathing life into the gods.

### VISITOR INFORMATION

Once in Tamil Nadu, the easiest way to get between cities is to use local buses or to hire a car and driver, depending on your budget. To give an idea of prices, a driver from the Hotel Sea Breeze in Mahabalipuram met me at the Chennai airport and took me straight to the hotel, 36 miles, for 1,200 rupees, or about \$26 at 46 rupees to the dollar. In a car without air-conditioning, the ride would have cost 900 rupees. The two-hour bus ride between Mamallapuram and Pondicherry cost the equivalent of \$1 or \$2.

### WHERE TO STAY

In Mahabalipuram, I stayed at the Hotel Sea Breeze, a stone's throw from the beach (Ottavada Street; 91-44-2744-3035). A double costs 2,025 rupees a night.

In Pondicherry, a pleasant place to stay is the Vatika Guest Home, on the northern edge of the old colonial center (67 François Martin Street; 91-413-233-3980; www.vatikaguesthome.com). It has seven rooms, three with air-conditioning (and plans to add it to all), costing 1,000 to 1,500 rupees.

In Thanjavur, I stayed in at the Hotel Oriental Towers (2889 Srinivasam Pillai Road; 91-4362-230-724; www.hotelorientaltowers.com) for 990 rupees a night.

In Madurai, the Hotel Park Plaza is in the old city (114-115 West Perumal Maistry Street; 91-452-301-1111; www.hotelparkplaza.net), and charges 1,925 rupees for a double. Ask for a room with views of the Meenakshi Sundareshwarar temple.

All the rates cited above include a luxury tax. You can bargain down the rates during low season.

### WHERE TO EAT

Tamil Nadu has one of the most flavorful regional cuisines in India. The traditional style of cooking, called Chettinad, often mixes curry leaves, tamarind, anise and even rosewater. Hot pepper is used more liberally than in other parts of India. Mahabalipuram is a great place for seafood. Moonrakers on Othavada Street (91-4114-242-115; users.telenet.be/oochappan/moonrakers) uses authentic spices in its dishes. A dinner for two there costs no more than 390 rupees. Another great place is Mamalla Bhavan, on Shore Temple Road in the town center. It's a typical south Indian "eats" canteen, where you can order a set meal of rice and curry, known as a thali, for about 30 rupees. It is very popular with locals and few tourists go there.

An atmospheric place to eat in Pondicherry is Satsanga, in a converted colonial mansion at 30, rue de la Bourdonnais (91-413-2225-867). It serves Continental and Indian cuisine.

In Thanjavur, I had a memorable dinner at the Thillana restaurant in the Sangam hotel, on Trichy Road (www.hotelsangam.com/tindextan.html). The restaurant offers excellent traditional Chettinad dishes, the best of which are made with fish or shrimp. They also have live Carnatic music, a tradition of the south. A dinner for one runs around \$10.

In Madurai, there are some good, cheap canteens on West Perumal Maistry Street, the busy lane where Hotel Park Plaza and other popular hotels are located. The hotel restaurants are also good. Meals at the canteens run 50 cents to \$1, while ones at the hotel restaurants run \$5 to \$8. Many hotels on West Perumal Maistry Street, including Park Plaza, Supreme and Chentoor, have great temple views from their rooftop restaurants.

### GUIDES

The Rough Guide to South India (www.roughguides.com, \$23.99) strikes a good balance between historical context and practical information.

In Madurai, I hired Ram Kumar, a guide recommended by the local tourist office, to take me around the Meenakshi Sundareshwarar Temple. He charges 300 to 400 rupees, depending on the length of the tour. He can also take you around other parts of Madurai, including the Royal Palace Compound, which has a stunning collection of Chola-era bronze statues, as well as an interesting library with Sanskrit manuscripts. His cell phone number is 91-984-263-6312, and his e-mail addresses are professional\_guide@yahoo.co.in and guide4uall@rediffmail.com.

[courtesy: NY Times]

## Sri Lankan man wins seven-year battle for asylum in the US

Ahilan Nadarajah fled his native country in 2001 after being arrested, beaten and tortured for allegedly belonging to a terrorist group. He won his case despite secret evidence presented by U.S. lawyers.

By Anna Gorman

After being beaten and tortured by the Sri Lankan army, Ahilan Nadarajah fled his native country in 2001.

He sought asylum in Immigration Court here and won, twice. But because of secret evidence accusing him of being a terrorist, the U.S. government kept him behind bars and then on an electronic monitor.

Seven years after his arrival, Nadarajah's ordeal is finally coming to an end. Late last week, the U.S. attorney general declined to review the case, clearing the way for Nadarajah, 28, to receive asylum. "I'm so happy today," he said. "I want to [give] thanks to America because they finally gave me my freedom."

The American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, which represented Nadarajah, announced the victory Tuesday and said he is only one of thousands of asylum seekers who have fled persecution in their countries only to be imprisoned here. In many of those cases, attorney Ahilan Arulanantham said, the government takes far too long to decide cases and often denies them based on incorrect evidence.

"Ahilan Nadarajah's story is important beyond the personal

tragedy that he suffered because it offers a window into the human costs to the mistakes -- and there are thousands of mistakes that the government has made by turning the war on terror into a war on immigrants," said Arulanantham, the director of immigrants rights and national security at the ACLU.

The attorney general's office, which had the case for more than two years, declined to comment.

Nadarajah, an ethnic Tamil farmer, was first arrested in Sri Lanka in 1997. The government accused him of belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which was battling the country's army. Nadarajah denied participation in the group, but soldiers still beat him, hung him upside down and burned him with cigarettes, according to court papers. Nadarajah was released on a bribe from his family but was rearrested. Soldiers tortured him again, holding his head inside a bag full of gasoline and beating him. Again, his family bribed authorities for his release.

After paying smugglers to help him escape, Nadarajah traveled through Thailand, South Africa, Brazil and Mexico. U.S. immigration authorities arrested him as he tried to enter the country.

In 2003, a U.S. immigration judge granted him asylum, despite the secret evidence presented by government lawyers accusing Nadarajah of belonging to the Tamil group. The government appealed, and the case was reheard, leading to a second grant of asylum. The government appealed again and in 2006, the Board of Immigration Appeals ruled in favor of Nadarajah.

Then the government took an unusual step, referring the case to the attorney general for review.

Nadarajah spent 4 1/2 years in immigration detention, including six months in isolation, as he fought his case. The ACLU sued for his release, resulting in a U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling saying that the lengthy detention was illegal. He was released but still had to wear an ankle monitor.

Nadarajah said he is not angry with the U.S. government but rather grateful that his name was cleared. He said he is eager to see his parents, who also fled the violence in his country and now live in India.

"I know that there are many, many people like me . . . unfairly kept in jail," he said. "I am hoping that they will also get their freedom."

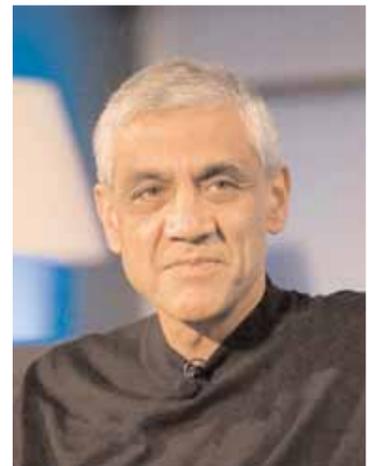
[courtesy: LA Times.com]

## Gates reclaims top place

Tech guru Vinod Khosla and three other men of Indian origin are on the 2008 list of the 400 richest Americans prepared by Forbes magazine. The list, released on Wednesday, is topped by Microsoft founder, Mr Bill Gates, followed by legendary investor, Mr William Buffet with fortunes of about \$57 billion and \$50 billion respectively. Oracle Corp founder Lawrence Ellison, worth \$27 billion, is in the third position. While Mr Khosla, co-founder of Sun Microsystems and a venture capitalist, is ranked 355 with a personal wealth of \$1.4 billion, the other three Indian Americans on the list are Google investor, Mr Kavitar Ram Shriram (rank 281), Syntel founder, Mr Bharat Desai and family (321), and Amar Bose (also ranked 321) of Bose sound systems.

All four are self-made billionaires. To get on the Forbes' list, the minimum net worth needed was \$1.3 billion this year.

Mr Shriram, 51, with a person-



al wealth of \$1.7 billion, is a Chennai-born entrepreneur who started at Netscape in 1994.

Later, he created shopping site Jungle, which he sold to Amazon in 1998. An early investor and a board member of Google, he still owns 1.3 million shares worth \$600 million.

Today, the Californian backs some Indian and US startups and sits on the board of Indian job site Naukri.com. Mr Khosla, 52, also based in California, is an Indian

Ins-titute of Technology (IIT) product from India with an MBA from Stanford.

He co-founded electric design automation company Daisy Systems in 1980.

Two years later he joined others to form Sun Microsystems.

He served as its chief executive before turning to finance full-time in 1996. In 2004, he started Khosla Ventures, which funds "science experiments" like solar panels and clean technology.



# Monsoon Features

## Canadian Tamils Celebrate the World Premiere of Kanchivaram at TIFF

The Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) felicitated the makers of the Tamil film 'Kanchivaram' which had its world premiere in a red carpet Special Presentation event at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). The film by acclaimed Indian director Priyadarshan was screened at the VISA screening room at the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre in Toronto on Friday Sept. 12 at 6:00PM. The movie was well received by the 1400 people in attendance.

Following the screening CTC hosted the film's director Priyadarshan, stars Prakash Raj and Shammu, and Producer Shailendra Singh of Percept Picture Company at The Young Centre for the Performing Arts in the Distillery Historic District in Toronto. The event was attended by other Canadian film makers including young Tamil Canadian filmmakers, film producers and promoters, and prominent Tamil Canadian artistes. Tamil Canadian visual artist Gaya Ranjith emceed the event. In her opening remarks she compared the plight of the Eelam Tamils to that of the protagonist in the movie.

Speaking on behalf of the CTC, Dushy Gnanapragasam welcomed the guests and said that the warm and red carpeted welcome given to this Tamil film at the TIFF will inspire and encourage the many young Tamil Canadians who aspire to be film makers.

He also noted that the fact that a major Tamil film such as 'Kanchivaram' chose to have its world premiere in Toronto acknowledges Toronto's emergence as a major centre for activities promoting Tamil language and culture. Popular Tamil poet Prof. Cheran of Windsor University critiqued the movie. He commended the film makers for making a "meticulously researched" movie that travels well off the beaten path of Tamil filmdom.

He drew parallels between the alienation suffered by the protagonist in the movie and the Eelam Tamils. He made special mention of the reference to 'yarlpanam puhayilai' (tobacco leafs from Jaffna) in the movie and concluded if one understands how 'yarlpanam puhayilai' ended up in Malaya then one will understand the struggle of the Eelam Tamils.

The presentation of mementos followed, presided over by Piragal Thiru of CTC. Prominent Tamil Canadian broadcaster and director P. Wickneswaran presented a commemorative trophy to actor Prakash Raj who played the main protagonist in the movie in a convincing manner.

Tam Sivathasan, who is one of the directors of Independent Art Film Society which organizes the annual International Tamil Short Film Festival in Toronto, presented the memento to Director Priyadarshan. Both Prakash Raj and Priyadarshan spoke briefly after receiving their mementos. They thanked the attendees for the warm welcome and CTC for the support given them. They stressed the importance of such support for the emergence of meaningful Tamil cinema. Pon Balarajan, on behalf of the board of directors at CTC, presented the producer of the movie Shailendra Singh with a memento. Actress Shammu, who played a significant role in the movie also spoke briefly at the event.

The event drew to a close with the emcee Gaya Ranjith thanking the attendees and bidding adieu.



Director Priyadarshan with Producer Shailendra Singh receives the Memento from Pon Balarajan



Actor Prakash Raj receives the Commemorative Trophy from TVI Program Director P. Wickneswaran



Visual Artist Gaya Ranjith emceeding the event



Dushy Gnanapragasam welcomes the guests



Prof. Cheran from University of Windsor reviews the film



Pragal Thiru presiding over the presentation of mementos



Actress Shammu thanking all for the support given to her



Guests seen at the Reception



Real Estate Broker Tam Sivathasan presents the Memento to Director Priyadarshan



"Monsoon Journal" Editor Siva Sivapragasam and Publisher Logan Velumailum in conversation with Director Priyadarshan



Actor Prakash Raj with Christeen and Mahindan Seevaratnam at the Reception



Young Film Fans with Actress Shammu at the Reception

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# Official Opening of the New Law Office of Meleni David...

## MESSAGE FROM MELENI DAVID



ON THE OCCASION OF THE GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW LAW OFFICE OF MELENI DAVID, MELENI DAVID AND HER STAFF WISH TO REMEMBER AND ACKNOWLEDGE ALL OF THEIR CLIENTS AND WELLWISHERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT DURING THE LAST 3 YEARS IN BUSINESS. WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXTEND OUR SINCERE THANKS TO ALL OF YOU, FOR ALL YOUR TRUST IN US AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO SERVE YOU TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY.



Meleni with her parents and sister



Meleni with her husband Prakash and their daughters

Amidst a representative gathering of professionals, businessmen and media personnel, the new plush offices of Lady Lawyer Meleni David was officially opened recently. Immediate members of her family and other well wishers lit the traditional lamp before the commencement of the function.

Speaking to the guests present at the function, Meleni thanked the Media and her office staff team (referring to them as "her family") for the continuous and great support provided by them for the

success of her professional services. She introduced her staff team to the guests paying a glowing tribute to each of them for the role each staff member played for the efficient running of the firm. She did not fail to mention that it was her father and husband Prakash who were of immense support to her in building up the office to it's present position.

At the end of the function, guests were entertained to sumptuous refreshments catered by a Russian lady.

↓ Meleni and her staff pose for a group shot ↓



Fr Jeethendran conducting the prayers



Meleni with her staff and guests



Meleni with Monsoon Journal staff and her guests

All above moments captured by : Gnan Gnanendran

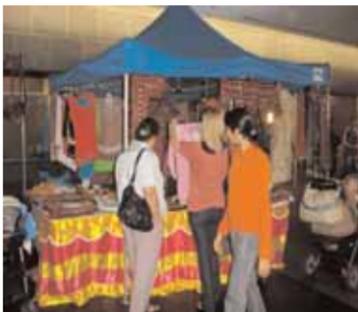
# Waterloo News



## Cultural diversity, another milestone for Mela celebrations

Kitchener: The local Indo-Canada Association along with Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region and Gujarati Association celebrated the annual Mela festival. It is annual event to show case Indian culture and Heritage to the public. The event was held at the Rotunda Hall, City of Kitchener on the 10th of October.

The Chief Guest, the Mayor of Kitchener, His worship Carl Zehr inaugurated the festival. The president of Indo-Canada Mrs. Kokila khanna welcomed all the guests and sponsors. The inaugural program was the South Indian Classical dance, Bharatha Natyam. The whole day program included dances, Music and Fashion shows. Food and consumer goods vendor booths were filled with a large number of guests. It was another successful year for the Indian association.



## Fairfax's Prem Watsa to serve as 9th chancellor of the University of Waterloo

WATERLOO, Ont. (Friday, Sept. 19, 2008) -- One of Canada's foremost business leaders, Prem Watsa, will be the next chancellor of the University of Waterloo.

India-born Watsa, chairman and CEO of Fairfax Financial Holdings Ltd., will serve as UW's next chancellor. He will assist UW in its mission to become one of North America's premier universities, with international academic programs and exchanges that reach around the world.

Watsa's appointment was approved by UW senate earlier this week and he will begin his term as chancellor, succeeding RIM founder and co-CEO Mike Lazaridis, on May 1, 2009. The chancellor presides over all convocation ceremonies, conferring degrees, diplomas and certificates on graduating students. The chancellor also serves as a leading ambassador for the university.

"Since its founding just over 50 years ago, the University of Waterloo has distinguished itself as a learning institution that is quite unique among its peers in Canada and abroad," says Watsa. "I look forward to working with students, faculty and staff in whatever small ways I can to help the university achieve its ambitious plans for the coming decade."

Watsa brings to the position considerable international experience as well as a strong belief in the value of supporting students and community. The university's sixth decade plan, which took effect last year, calls for a focus on the undergraduate student experience, a growing of grad studies and an expansion of UW's international reach that will include the opening of two campuses abroad.

"Prem Watsa is a remarkable human being, a family man and a strong believer in Canada with an international outlook," says UW president David Johnston. "This outstanding and self-made leader demonstrates integrity and, as such, reflects the qualities the university embraces and tries to encourage amongst our students."

Watsa was born in Hyderabad, India in 1950. He earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology in 1971. He moved to Ontario the following year and later earned an MBA from the University of Western Ontario.

His professional career began at Confederation Life Insurance Co. in Toronto and he served as vice-president of Confederation Life Investment Counsel from 1974 to 1983. He then served a year as vice-president of start-up

firm GW Asset Management.

Watsa co-founded Hamblin Watsa Investment Counsel Ltd. (now fully owned by Fairfax) in 1984. The next year he took control of Markel Financial Holdings Ltd. In 1987, he re-organized Markel and renamed it Fairfax, which is short for fair and friendly acquisitions. The name reflects the company's guiding principles, which maintain that honesty and integrity are essential in all relationships and will never be compromised.

Watsa's ties to UW go back more than a decade. His nephew Mano was a two-time Canadian Interuniversity Sport all-Canadian and a four-time Ontario University Athletics all-star while playing basketball for Waterloo from 1994 to 1999. He was a two-time academic all-Canadian and team captain from 1996 to 1999, and won the Ken Shields TSN Award for community involvement. He later served in coaching positions on UW's men's and women's basketball teams.

Fairfax is currently working with UW to create a one-year professional master's program in actuarial science at UW, for launch in fall 2009. Still subject to approval, the program will provide actuarial training to 30 students, one-third of them from India, who have strong quantitative undergraduate degrees. UW will also seek to partner with Indian universities to increase local teaching and research capacity in actuarial science.

Prem Watsa will serve as the ninth chancellor. He succeeds Lazaridis, a UW alum who developed the technology that led to the creation of the BlackBerry and Research In Motion.

The University of Waterloo has long been recognized as the most innovative university in Canada, widely known for its innovative and entrepreneurial spirit, and non-traditional approaches. UW pioneered co-operative education in Canada and today offers the largest post-secondary co-operative education program in the world.

To mark its 50th anniversary last year, the university embraced an ambitious sixth decade strategic plan entitled Pursuing Global Excellence: Seizing Opportunities for Canada. By 2017, UW plans to triple the size of its graduate student body, intensify its research activity, strengthen its commitment to helping undergraduate students learn by experience and expand its international connections by, among other things, opening two international campuses.



Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region  
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# Canada Newslines

## New tax breaks and savings for families with children

### EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILIES

Conservatives delivering more and better tax breaks and savings for families with children

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced new tax breaks and savings initiatives to expand opportunities for Canadian children.

"Giving working families a break is one of the most important Conservative priorities," said the Prime Minister. "It is why we have taken bold action to deliver real results to parents and their children."

Harper announced three new initiatives to help Canadian families:

Establishing a new Children's Arts Tax Credit, worth an estimated \$150 million annually, to encourage greater participation by children in arts activities.

Extending the benefit of the existing Children's Fitness Tax Credit and the new Children's Art Tax Credit to lower-income families that pay little or no income tax, by making both credits fully

refundable.

Expanding the Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) to allow charities and not-for-profit organizations to establish RESPs for children from low-income families in partnership with parents.

The Prime Minister said that today's announcement builds on modest, practical, credible and affordable improvements introduced by the Conservative Government since 2006, including:

Reducing the GST from seven to five per cent.

Introducing a \$100 per month Universal Child Care Benefit.

Providing targeted tax cuts for apprentice tools, textbooks and transit passes.

"These new policies will help give a break to working Canadian families," Harper said. "And they will make arts and fitness programs more accessible to all families, including families where financial costs impose real barriers."

## CONSERVATIVES STAND UP FOR NEWCOMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES



Diane Finley, Conservative candidate for Haldimand-Norfolk during a campaign platform for Wajid Khan in Mississauga-Streetsville quoted;

Conservatives welcomed the highest number of newcomers in our history - 429,649 in 2007 - surpassing the previous high in 1911.

"The Conservative Government believes in immigration," Finley said. "We want more newcomers and their families to join us and we want them to become successful Canadians."

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## Toronto Centre MP and Liberal Foreign Affairs Critic says "Sri Lanka war is entering a tragic new phase"

Bob Rae MP issued the following statement recently about the situation in Sri Lanka:

"The UN's humanitarian agency recently declared Sri Lanka one of the world's most dangerous places for aid workers and journalists. Sri Lanka's war is entering a tragic new phase as the Sri Lankan government issues an official warning that the government can no longer 'guarantee' the safety of aid workers in the north and east, and encouraging them to leave the area.

As violence between the government and the LTTE spirals out of control once again, the country's once admired democratic institutions are buckling under the strain. The LTTE emerged in the 1970s against a backdrop of mounting grievances in the north and east over declining access to language, employment, and political rights.

The response of the Sri Lankan government to these grievances was as swift as it was severe. It has waged a virtually uninterrupted military campaign against the LTTE since the early 1980s. The number of deaths in the fighting is now estimated at 75,000.

Such wars are inevitably accompanied by authoritarianism and fear. In addition to the growing role afforded to the military and the introduction of emergency regulations, the government has also clamped down on independent oversight bodies and press freedoms.

War-related militarization has far-reaching implications for democracy. Symptoms include sky-rocketing military spending and related racketeering. The current Minister of Defence Gotabhaya Rajapaksa's determination to 'win' the conflict militarily is matched by an equally impressive will to spend. Defence expenditures in 2007 were more than 50 per cent higher than in the previous year. They are expected to grow by another 20 per cent in 2008 to USD 1.48 billion. Defence now accounts for a fifth of all public spending.

While Western governments have been unanimous in their labeling of the LTTE as a terrorist organization (the LTTE practices

suicide bombings and recruits child soldiers), they have also been critical of the Sri Lankan government. Consequently, the Sri Lankan government turned to China and Pakistan for support. Even the President of Iran visited recently. These governments are far less likely to criticize Colombo for a democratic deficit. They are offering billions of dollars with no strings attached.

There is much that the warring parties in Sri Lanka can do to reverse this situation. A complete ceasefire and a return of the government, the LTTE and others to the negotiating table could reverse the escalating violence.

But a simple return to a negotiating table is not enough. The ceasefire of 2001 did not hold because there was no deep commitment to non-violence, and no irrevocable commitment to a democratic devolution that would see both self rule and shared rule. That is what now must be brokered between the parties.

Thousands of civilians have been violently killed and displaced since the resumption of war. Re-engaging independent monitors and getting them on the ground is critical to rebuilding confidence.

Sri Lanka's standing as a model democracy in South Asia is suffering under the weight of war. The warning signs are clear. In 2006 the Worldwide Press Freedom index placed Sri Lanka in between Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Likewise, Transparency International consistently reports corruption at the highest levels of executive and legislative government. The relentless conflict continues. Democracy itself hangs in the balance.



Above all, Sri Lankans need to be able to imagine a country where mutual respect, new forms of autonomy and shared governance, and an abandonment of extremist ideologies are possible. It will require extraordinary courage and determination to get there. The alternative - more death, more repression, more corruption, deeper economic stagnation - must not be allowed.

Canada can hardly be indifferent to this conflict. Our own experience with federalism and conflict prevention, our deep attachment to pluralism, and our ties to this troubled country should push us to far more active engagement.

Our aid and our diplomacy need to be focused on a renewed push for a ceasefire, for a demobilization of the conflict, and for a commitment to parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. Anything else will mean more repression and more suffering. We don't need a Canada on the sidelines, or a Canada wagging its finger 10,000 kilometres away. We need a Canada that is knowledgeable and engaged. That is what the Liberal Party believes in, and what we are committed to achieving as the government."

## Current finance crisis less serious than 1929: Stiglitz

The crisis now gripping world financial markets should be less serious than that of 1929, Nobel Prize laureate Joseph Stiglitz said recently, because new "instruments" could prevent a depression.

"The general view is that we have instruments, monetary and fiscal policy, that we know how to prevent another great depression," he said.

A devastating stock market crash in the United States in October 1929 sparked a worldwide economic slowdown, which came to be known as

the Great Depression.

However, Stiglitz, a former chief economist at the World Bank and long-standing critic of the International Monetary Fund, cautioned that "knowledge is not always translated into actions".

He argued, as an example, that during the Asian financial crisis of 1998 the "IMF had the knowledge how to prevent Indonesia from going into depression but took measures that actually led it into depression."

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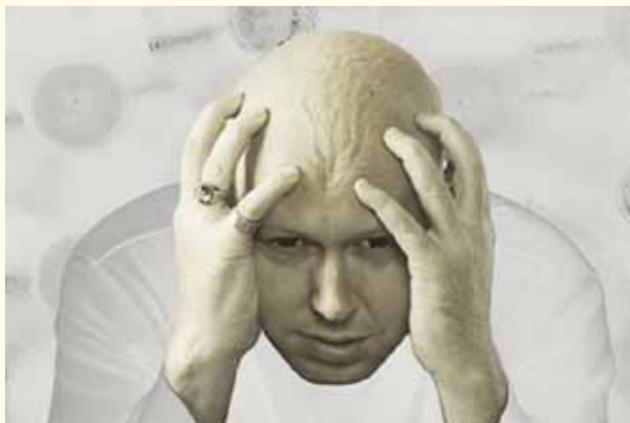
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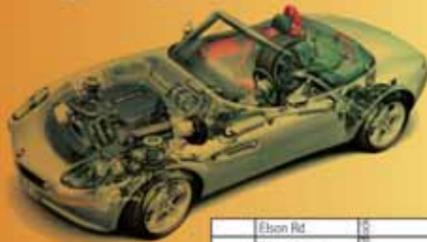
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# Monsoon Features

Meditation - a path towards utter freedom

## Meditation fills hearts with Love

Prof. Saran Ghai

*"The love you take is equal to the love you make." - St. John Lennon*

This one quotation is enough to explain the significance of love. Love is the first emotion that God fills in everyone. The moment a child takes birth in this world starts experiencing love. The first moment of his life and the first breath he inhales of this world's environment fills in him the emotions of love. When he cries the very first time, it is not that he/she is suffering from any kind of pain, but is sad that he/she had to leave his/her mother's womb which was the most protected and loving places to live in. He cries that he lost his secured and warm abode. But immediately after when the mother lays him/her on her, hugs and kisses, he/she understands that yes, he/she is still protected, loved and being cared about. Those moments of give and take of love and warmth of body are remembered by both of them and they live and love their relationship as a mother and son/daughter ever after.

In the same manner when someone dies, people cry and mourn on his/her departure as they then realize that how useful the departed person was for them and now what would they do as he/she is not present anymore in this world and will never come to them again. Everyone feels sad because they loved the departed person and they know that they are going to miss the person for ever.

We cry and we mourn as someone leaves us for time being or forever. In the same manner we become happy if we come to know that someone is coming to see us. Why? This is because we love the person coming to see us. We love as God has filled our hearts with love. Though we keep grudges, shame, pain, anger, bigotry and other feelings of hatred in our heart but as a matter of fact above all these feeling we have the feeling of love which is supreme. Love keeps purifying our hearts.

Make an experiment. Sit at a calm and quiet place somewhere in your house. Keep your eyes closed. When you find you are in control of your heart start visualizing all those things that you love. Keep making a list in your mind of all such things you love, like and adore. Keep on counting. Stress your mind and try to recollect the memories of all such

moments you loved. Don't stop. Remember your deeds which were adored by others and you said at that time - O' I love it.

Do you have a boy friend or a girl friend? Try to recollect the moments you were in love most. Recollect all those memories when your father or your mother hugged you, kissed you, appreciated you. Remember the moments when you used to play with your brothers and sisters and now you miss those moments. Recollect every such moment when you had the best sex with your husband/wife or someone who you love. Try to remember every such memory which could bring a smile on your face. You will find the list countless. At this moment just give a try to make one another list of the things or persons you hate. You will count a few but immediately you will find that your mind refuses to help you here as the brain is still engaged in the things you loved and not the things that you hate.

Your mind will refuse to think about negativity because you are enjoying the moments of positivity. Positive thoughts will fill your heart with love. Visualize and feel the love being radiated from you and the whole world is being filled with the emotion of love. Spread love and merge in love with everyone.

Once you have experienced that state of love you will notice that love is omnipresent. Everyone is in love with the things and persons they like. The emotion of love is above all other emotions. Every breathe you take in and take out, each time when your heart beats and in every sensation amalgamated with love, you will find there nothing but love.

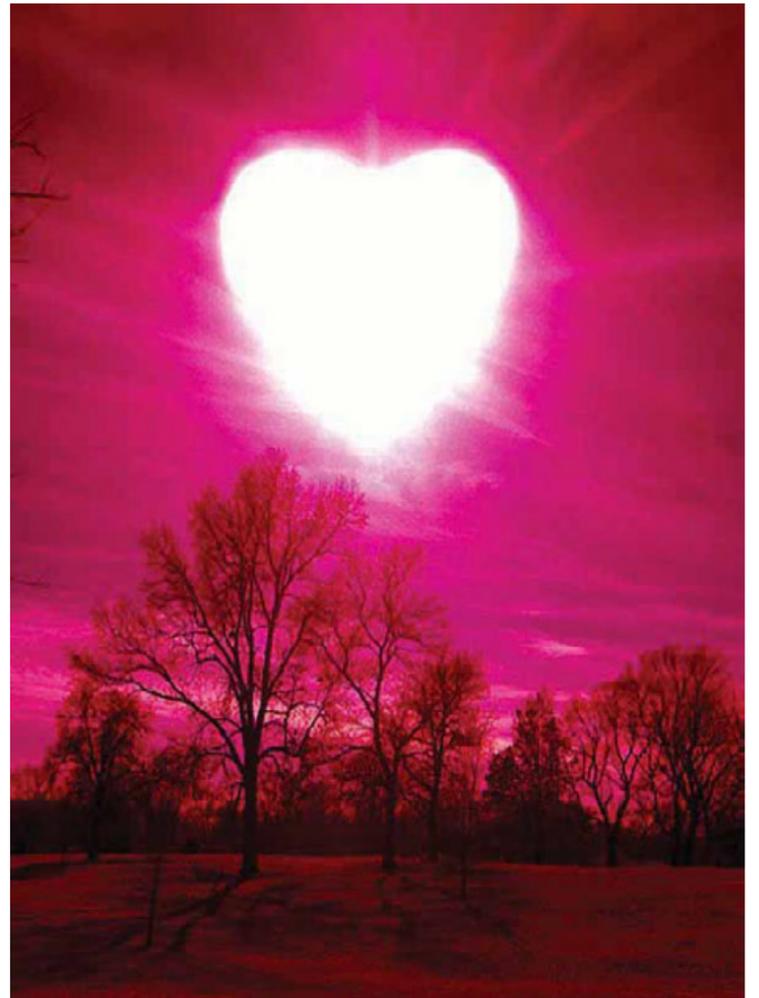
Make one more experiment. Sit in a comfortable place in a posture easy for you to sit in. Free yourself from every kind of tension. Close your eyes and start feeling your breaths coming in and out. Harmonize your feelings with your breathing. Start feeling every single breathe and concentrate for a while. Your experiment starts here. The next breathe that you take in, mix it up with a feeling of love. Let the breaths going out, go. Concentrate only on the breaths that you are taking in. Keep on filling your body with the emotion of love coming in you along with your breaths. Keep storing that love in your heart, in your mind, in all the organs and in each and every cell of your body. Make your body storage of love. Now feel every living being on this

earth doing the same kind of act. Each one is filling in the emotions of love in his brain, heart and other parts of body. Feel as if everyone has become a messenger of love. This world has been packed in with the people who are the ambassadors of love. How loving and beautiful this feeling is. Now visualize the entire universe pulsing with love. No hate, just love.

Whenever you feel like repeating this exercise, do it. Make this world a place of love and a place to love. You will realize that there are no separate emotions in all of us- there is only infinite love and bliss. Those who are engaged in spreading hatred, forgive them as they do not know what they are doing. As a matter of fact God has sent them on this earth with a purpose. God knows that in the absence of fear, love starts diminishing. This is as per human psychology that if you are not answerable for any particular thing you will become careless about it. If you are not scared that you will be punished, you will engage yourself in vices. So, do not worry about others for what good or bad they are doing. Just concentrate on your deeds. Your deeds should be good for you and for others.

When you are in a state of confusion what to do and what not, meditate. Sit calm in a quiet corner of your house. Sit in a posture you feel comfortable. Concentrate on your breaths coming and going out. Start contemplating about the good and bad deeds. With each breathe that you inhale, get in something good for you and with each breathe that you exhale, extract an evil from your body. Purify your thoughts and make your body pious. Let your brain distinguish between good and bad. Take the good ideas in and throw the bad ideas out. Inhale wisdom, exhale ignorance. Inhale courage, exhale fear. Inhale humility, exhale egoism. Inhale tranquility, exhale nervousness. Inhale peace, exhale suffering. Inhale compassion, exhale cold-heartedness and above all inhale love, exhale hate. You will notice that you are changing. You will be in a position to control your emotions. You will notice within yourself that now you are a better person as compared to before. You will start noticing that there is always something in each one of us which is lovable and adorable.

Love is the phenomenon of the universe. The definition of love is the definition of the exist-



tence of the universe. Meditating minds know that love is like a magnetic power which keeps the state of coherence between people to people, community to community and country to country. Love is the first and the last thing to know on this earth. If on any stage in your life you get puzzled to choose between 'to love or not to love', choose love and you will live happily ever after.

-Continued

(Prof. Saran Ghai is an author, editor and publisher of a number of books, magazines and newspapers. He is also a palm reader and a numerologist. Readers of Monsoon Journal can contact Prof. Ghai at (416) 816-5559, E-mail: [muktipath@muktipathmeditation.com](mailto:muktipath@muktipathmeditation.com) or visit his website: [www.muktipathmeditation.com](http://www.muktipathmeditation.com).)

### Pill to halve heart attack risk

Indian generic drug company Dr Reddy's new tablet that can halve the risk of death due to heart attacks and stroke is set to go under clinical trials this week in London.

The once-a-day tablet called Red Heart Pill combines four different medicines - aspirin, a statin to lower cholesterol, and an ACE inhibitor and a thiazide to counter high blood pressure in one tablet.

Seven hundred volunteers have been recruited in six countries for a 12-week pilot trial.

If all goes well, the main trial with 5,000 to 7,000 volunteers will begin at the end of 2009.

Anthony Rodgers, codirector of the clinical trials unit at the University of Auckland, leader of the project, said it had been a struggle to get the polypill this far.

"The chances of mainstream pharmaceutical industry taking this on are slim," the Guardian quoted him as saying.

"We spent a few years around about 2000-2002 trying to persuade a number of companies to do this,

but got nowhere. Basically, their whole business model is around people paying a few hundred pounds a year for the latest blockbuster drug.

"A pill with established medicines that halved cardiovascular risk and could be available for £20 a year could be seen as a threat," he added.

"There are particular groups in our community who are not getting the required preventive therapy, both among those at modest cardiovascular risk who are not being evaluated and those at pretty serious risk who have already had a heart attack," said Prof.

Simon Thom, from the international centre of circulatory health at Imperial College London, where the UK arm of the trial is taking place and where the first volunteer will begin taking the tablets this week.

The research teams, with the backing in the UK of the Wellcome Trust and the British Heart Foundation, are just a few years away from making the polypill an accessible reality.

# Monsoon Features

Arumuga-Naaval was an outstanding Saiva-Tamil revivalist and orator. Born on 18th December 1822, he died young by today's standards, on 5th December 1879, at just 56 plus. His unique lifetime achievements and social contributions could conveniently be grouped into six categories, in terms of his services to the progress of: 1. Education; 2. Tamil Language and Literature; 3. Saivism; 4. The

was 19, he had earned a reputation as an accomplished scholar, uniquely proficient in Tamil and English, and versed in Saivite and Christian doctrines. In 1834, when he was 12, he joined Rev. Peter Percival's new Methodist English School, later named Jaffna Central College. While learning English at school, he had continued his studies in Tamil literature and grammar, under the private tutorship of eminent

He had realised the value of education when he was young, and wanted everyone else around him to become educated also, as far as practicable, at least in Tamil.

Ceylon, renamed Sri Lanka in 1972, was ruled by the Portuguese from 1505, the Dutch from 1646, and by Britain from 1796. Foreign rule triggered the usual strains on indigenous religions, languages and education. These traumas peaked in the 1820s & 1830s dur-

## HEXAHEDRAL ORATOR WITH A HAZY SEVENTH FACET?

**Prof. Kopan Mahadeva M.Sc, PhD, Hon. D.Litt, FIET, FCMI, FSH**

Arts of Debating and Oratory; 5. His Country's Development and Prosperity; and 6. Humanity. In recognition of his internationally acknowledged prowess in the arts of debating and oratory, the Head of the Thirvaavaduthurai Aatheenam in South India conferred on him in 1849, the title of 'Naaval' (as a permanent suffix to his name) before a distinguished gathering of religious leaders and intellectuals. In later and modern times, the title of Naaval has become almost synonymous with our hero himself. And in 1971, the Government of Ceylon brought out a special stamp in his honour posthumously to (at last) recognise his religious, educational and social contributions to their Indian Ocean island state.

Navalar's birth-name was Arumugam-Pillai. He was considered a child prodigy. His Saivite family lived in Jaffna District's Nallur of 19th Century Ceylon. One of his famous forefathers was Gnanapragasa Swamigal. His grandfather was Gate Mudaliyar Paramanantar. His father was Kanthar-Pillai, himself an Aaraachi for 18 years during the Dutch administration -- replaced by the British in 1796. Kanthar was a reputed poet and dramatist. He had written over 20 plays, and also practised medicine. Arumugam, when only nine, is said to have completed a play started by his father, after the latter's death. Arumugam's mother was Sivakaamy who passed away when he was just five. Arumugam had four older brothers who, he later wrote in 1868, provided him with little material support.

Young Arumugam received both private and institutionalised education in Tamil language and literature, grammar, English, and Hindu scriptures. By the time he

teachers such as Senaathiraaya Muthaliyaar and Pulavar Saravanamuththu. By the time he completed his schooling six years later, he was admirably invited to teach Tamil even to his English Tutor, Rev. Peter Percival.

At this stage, a proper Tamil translation for the Bible was being sought. There were some 13 translations then, in South India and Ceylon, but all considered inferior. Western authors with scanty knowledge in Tamil had written them. (1)

Hence the Review Committee Chairman, Rev. Percival, recommended his own Tutee/Tutor for this task, and Arumugam gladly accepted it. The first steps on this book were taken in 1840 but writing began only in 1846, it was completed in 1848, and his Bible was published in Madras in 1850 with unanimous acclaim. Percival had in mind, converting his brilliant protégé to Christianity. Thus he asked Arumugam to teach English to lower classes, and Tamil to higher forms at his school, which was done, but the offer of a permanent teaching position was declined. And Arumugam began his own, lifelong crusade for Tamil and Saivism.

**Service as a Pioneering, Dedicated Educationist in South East Asia**

Of the six facets of his services to humanity, by serving his own people without ever even thinking of harming anyone else, he excelled most as an educator. He taught willingly without any fees, almost from the time he finished his secondary education at 18 years. He taught anyone who wished to learn, in the mornings, evenings and at night, first at home and later at schools and temples. And many were attracted, inspired by his intellect, honesty and astounding enthusiasm.

ing the British reign, as perceived by young Arumugam. He decided to arrest the decline and reverse that trend, and hence sacrificed his prospects to marry a rich girl, secure employment, and thereby live comfortably.

It was the Christian missionaries who studiously caused maximum damage to Tamil and Saivism, openly aided by the foreign rulers. Anglican missionaries arrived in 1804, Baptist Society in 1812, Wesleyan Methodists in 1814, American Priests in 1816, and the Catholics in 1818. They chose the Tamil areas of the North and East for their work, as the best pastures, focused on building churches and schools there, and began by imposing English education as the first step to religious conversion of Hindus to Christianity. They lured the locals by offering food, clothing, cash, and board with lodging to young pupils, and higher social status and priesthoods to their families. At one stage, in most areas, education was available only in the mission schools, because Tamil schools of the day were forced to close down without further state funds, as a result of unfair allegations that their syllabuses, curricula and administration were inferior and unsuitable.

In order to rectify the above situation, Naaval himself wrote textbooks on grammar, literature, religious practices, logic and debating, ethics and morals, general knowledge, and even on Ceylon Geography, printed them and sold them cheap or gave them free. His books were written in his own revolutionary and pioneering crisp style of simple, prosaic Tamil with punctuation marks, etc, as different from the verse-form of written Tamil that then existed without specific sen-



tences or even full stops. He rebuilt perished school sheds, started classes in domestic forecourts and under trees, and later built new Tamil Saiva schools in Jaffna in Ceylon, and Chithamparam in South India, and then a few more in Jaffna including an English school, all of them properly established as Trusts. (2)

In serving the cause of education, Naaval turned himself into a prolific author, commentator, editor, printer and also publisher of books on grammar, literary comment, poetry, religion, and in fact on any topic that he felt was immediately needed in schools or by society. When he found that easily understandable textbooks just did not exist or were in short supply or too dear, he wrote his own books and printed and published them and either sold them cheap or gave them free. He also painstakingly collected palm-leaf manuscripts of old and popular Saiva and Tamil literature, and printed them as poetry-based originals and also with prosaic commentaries, each properly edited and reputedly with no mistakes at all, in paper-book format, both in Ceylon and in South Indian Tamil Naadu. For this purpose he even learnt and taught the arts of typesetting, printing and binding, and bought machinery and set up his own presses. Thus he is reported to have brought out over 75 books before his death, as in the list of Appendix-1.

**In Vigorous Defence and Furtherance of Saivism**

As advised by his eldest brother, Arumugam enrolled with Rev. Percival for his secondary education in 1834, at 12 years, like

many other children of his time who joined the new missionary schools, got baptised, and took on even Christian surnames for personal benefits. He, of course, refused to change his religion. For, by studying Christianity and Saivism deeply, he was able to see the merits and 'maybe's' in both religions, and decided that there was no case for his peoples' conversions based on intrinsic religious merits alone. And he went further. He vigorously rebuked the ridicules spread by the visitors against Saivite practices such as idol worship, multiplicity of deities, caste system, fasts, and poojas, partly by pointing out many parallel enigmas in their imported doctrines, and partly by persuading his own folks to cease untenable, unhealthy rituals and practices.

He travelled to South India, worshipped in all the better-known shrines there, and established working rapport and mutual respect with the leading Saivites, social and temple leaders of that time, as he did with Percival, back in Ceylon. His new title of Naaval gave him an added air of authority internationally, and as a propagandist against conversions to Christianity. Two of the pioneering methods by which he achieved this goal were through pamphleteering, and by hard-hitting articles, with pseudonyms, in Tamil and English papers like: Ilankai Nesan, Morning Star, Suthesa Miththiran, Uthaya Tharakai, and Lankaapimaani.

**Will be continued in  
November Issue...**

# Monsoon Appreciation

## J.B. Jeyaretnam A Singapore Hero



Singapore opposition icon  
**J.B. Jeyaretnam**

JB Jeyaretnam, the veteran opposition politician in Singapore and the first opposition member to be elected as Member of Parliament in Singapore, passed away on Tuesday, Sep 30th of a heart attack at the age of 82.

Born in Jaffna, Sri Lanka in 1926, Joshua Benjamin Jeyaretnam, a Lawyer educated in Britain, was called to the bar in 1951. Settled in Singapore and engaged in politics, he became the first opposition MP to win a seat in the Singaporean Parliament in 1981.

The following appreciation of J.B. Jeyaretnam appeared in the Wall Street Journal Asia on Oct 1, 2008:

Singapore lost a man yesterday whose life reflected the best of the city-state. He suffered under the Japanese World War II occupation of the island; earned a place at the British bar; devoted himself to his work, family and faith; and forewent personal wealth to fight for democratic ideals in public office.

No, we're not talking about the country's founder and long-time Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, for whom much of the above is true. Yesterday Singapore lost its pre-eminent opposition leader, Joshua B. Jeyaretnam.

The ruling People's Action Party liked to paint Mr. Jeyaretnam as a communist, but he was more a moderate social democrat who spoke of his "calling as a Christian" and talked of "social justice." His economic ideas -- a welfare state and a minimum wage -- struck a chord among some voters, as did his message that an overcentralized government could be harmful.

"JBJ" entered politics in Singapore in 1971, when he

joined the Workers' Party. At the time, he was a wealthy lawyer who vacationed in Europe and had a maid and driver. He contested the 1972 and 1976 elections and lost to the PAP, which held every seat in Parliament.

Mr. Jeyaretnam soon had his first legal run-in with the PAP. In 1976, he lost a defamation suit brought by Mr. Lee over a speech the opposition leader gave at a campaign rally. To pay the damages, Mr. Jeyaretnam sold his house and moved into a rented apartment.

Over the years he was repeatedly sued by PAP leaders, and repeatedly bankrupted as a result of the judgments against him. But the convictions didn't stop him from winning public office, which he did in 1981, becoming the sole opposition MP elected to Parliament, and again in 1984 and 1997. During a 1986 inquiry into whether he had violated parliamentary privilege by questioning the integrity of judges, Mr. Jeyaretnam asked Mr. Lee, "So, do you think I have to be destroyed?" "Politically, yes," Mr. Lee responded. In his autobiography, Mr. Lee called his old opponent "a poseur, always seeking publicity, good or bad."

Mr. Jeyaretnam lost his seat in 1986 and was disbarred after being convicted of mishandling party funds. In 1988, the Privy Council in London overturned Mr. Jeyaretnam's disbarment, concluding that through a series of "misjudgements" Mr. Jeyaretnam had suffered "grievous injustice." The Law Lords found that JBJ and a colleague "have been fined, imprisoned and publicly disgraced for offences of which they were not guilty." In 2001, JBJ lost

another libel suit, became bankrupt, and was disqualified from running for re-election to Parliament.

Yet to the end, Mr. Jeyaretnam was never cowed by a fight. When he paid off his debts last

year, he was readmitted to the bar and soon took on controver-

sial cases, including the defense of another opposition leader, Chee Soon Juan, who, like JBJ, had lost a defamation suit brought by Mr. Lee. Mr. Jeyaretnam leaves behind a small group of opposition leaders, including two members of Parliament and a rowdy blogosphere of Singaporeans who agitate for more freedoms.

At the time of his death, Mr. Jeyaretnam, who was 82, was gearing up to contest for office again. At a press conference in April to announce the news, he said: "We are just beginning!"

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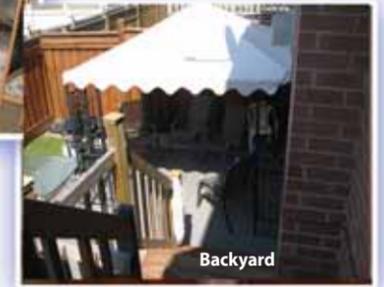


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# Monsoon Features

## Sri Lanka denies and delays food convoy entries for IDPs

Sri Lanka military is repeatedly denying or delaying convoys of essential items into Vanni, the region seeing intensified war and internal displacement.

On Sep 23rd, Colombo based Tamil daily Virakesari reported of lorries carrying food items being denied entry at Sri Lanka military's checkpoint in Omanthai, for the second time in two weeks.

The report further said:

The authorities in Vavuniya said entry was refused at the Omanthai crossing even though senior government officials recently concluded several essential and relief products will have to be sent to meet the needs of Kilinochchi district by Tuesday Sep 23. The officials had decided 20 lorries load of relief supplies will be needed. But none were allowed beyond Omanthai military check point throughout the day.

After the long wait, the lorries returned to Vavuniya in the evening. Later, the military agreed to allow 5 lorries but they couldn't travel as dusk had fallen.

For the entire last week, officials said the military did not grant permission to transport essential food items.

Now for the second time in two weeks, rejection of entry beyond Omanthai has put severe burden on already stressed relief operations amidst emptying food stocks, officials said.

Virakesari's report of entry for food lorries being denied comes amidst Sri Lanka defence ministry claiming several relief convoys were allowed into Vanni recently.

Sri Lanka defence website is stating essential items are being allowed into Vanni via Omanthai and Uyilangkulam checkpoints. The website of Sri Lanka military



further said, 73 lorries fully loaded with essentials were allowed into Kilinochchi and Mulaithivu districts between Sep 5th and Sep 11th.

The military hq website adds rice, lentil, dry fish, spices, clothing, fuel, building materials, medicine and auto parts were sent through the check points. During this 7 day period, a total of 1,228 persons crossed into Vanni and 1,119 travelled from there to Vavuniya through these entry points, according to a report on Sri Lanka military website.

## Thousands of Tamils participate in protests, vigils and fasts

Several vigils, fasts and protests are being held across North America and around the globe, drawing attention to the plight of Tamils living amidst human rights violations by Sri Lanka Government and Sri Lanka armed forces military onslaught.

On Sep 20th and 21st, a protest was held during the "Sri Lanka Day" celebrations at the Toronto Harbourfront Centre:

A light aircraft carrying the banner "Sri Lanka, Stop Killing Tamils", circled Toronto city centre in the clear skies of the sunny weekend.

Sources said there were more protesters than participants attending the "Sri Lanka Day". The protest drew the attention of thousands of people, at one the most highly visited - heavy traffic tourism areas in the City of Toronto.

Thousands of people attended the 27 hour musical vigil, "Thaai madi Thanguvom" .

A continuous a vigil for 27 hours with an accompanying musical journey by "Vanam paadigal" group was held at the

Canada, Kandaswamy temple located at 733 Birchmount Road, Scarborough during the same weekend.

30 youths commenced "30 Hour Famine", a fast at the Richmond Hill Hindu Temple on Sep 26th.

The youths called upon to help Tamils in the homeland who face hunger and starvation due to Sri Lanka government halting food convoys to war ravaged regions.

Over one thousand American Tamils, Canadian Tamils and friends of Tamils protested Wednesday, Sep 24th in front of the United Nations Headquarters in New York to draw attention of the United Nations, demanding sanctions against Sri Lanka, and advocating to invoke the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as a means to halt what the protesters alleged "genocide of Tamils."

The protesters also denounced the visit to the UN by the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

[pix: puthinam.com]

## NEW DEMOCRAT STATEMENT ON SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka has been involved in a deadly and violent conflict for over two decades. The situation has resulted in widespread death and destruction, impacting innocent civilians and international aid workers and humanitarian efforts. New Democrats unequivocally condemns the violent actions committed by both sides of the conflict which have caused the loss of civilian life.

Jack Layton and the New Democrats are listening to the community. They are telling us that the violence is escalating, human rights are being violated, and the number of deaths, political disappearances and forced evictions are growing.

As in the past, New Democrats continue to repeat calls to

end the war and urge the Sri Lankan government and military to resume discussions to establish peace with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Additionally, we stand by the following points, as outlined by Louise Arbour, the former United Nation's Human Rights High Commissioner:

All sides of the conflict must commit to an immediate peace settlement.

All sides must respect humanitarian law and accept monitors to report and address all serious violations of human rights and war crimes.

The government of Sri Lanka must support an independent inquiry into the human rights violations and prosecute the perpe-

trators immediately.

Reopen the A9 land link and work with all sides to establish an international peacekeeping force, that is acceptable to all parties, to maintain the link.

We remind our fellow Canadian politicians and parties not to use the situation in Sri Lanka as a partisan issue. The human rights and dignity of the Sri Lankans, Tamils and other minorities need to be respected and preserved.

Peace must always be the goal and New Democrats are prepared to explore options and solutions to bring peace to Sri Lanka.

For more information:

Rupinder Kaur, Media Officer:  
613-222-5048 or  
rupinder@ndp.ca

### Fast in Tamil Nadu against Sri Lankan Government military action in Vanni



Political parties in Tamil Nadu organized a fasting campaign in Chennai protesting against military action in the Wannai area and against civilian casualties and food shortages.

## CPI-led hunger strike draws thousands in Tamil Nadu

Thousands of people took to the venues in Tamil Nadu's capital city Chennai and other district capitals in the southern state of India on Oct 2nd to participate in a fasting campaign on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday demanding New Delhi to withdraw military assistance to Sri Lanka.

Several Tamil leaders, including Panruti S. Ramachandran, who was actively engaged in the Sri Lankan process under the late

Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M.G. Ramachandran (MGR) in the mid-80's addressed the participants at Seappaakkam. CPI National Secretary D. Raja, in his address, charged that New Delhi was clandestinely assisting Sri Lanka in its war against Tamils and questioned what the Indian personnel who came under attack in the North of Sri Lanka were doing there.



# Deepavali

India is a land of festivals. Deepavali, the Festival of Lights, is celebrated with fervor and gaiety. The festival is celebrated by young and old, rich and poor, throughout the country, to dispel darkness and light up their lives. The festival symbolizes unity in diversity as every state celebrates it in its own special way.

Deepavali is a celebration of a four-day festival. The first day of the festival Naraka Chaturdasi marks the vanquishing of the demon Naraka by Lord Krishna and his wife Satyabhama.

'Puranas' have it that Naraka, son of Bhudevi, acquired immense power from a blessing given to him by Lord Brahma after a severe penance. He soon unleashed a reign of terror in the kingdom of Kamarupa, harassing celestial beings with his invincible might. Unable to bear the tyranny of the demon, the celestial beings pleaded with Lord Krishna to save them from his torture. But Naraka could not be easily killed as he had a boon that he would face death only at the hands of his mother Bhudevi. So, Krishna asks his wife Satyabhama, the reincarnation of Bhudevi, to be his charioteer in the battle with Naraka.

When Krishna feigns unconsciousness after being hit by an arrow of Naraka, Sathybhama takes the bow and aims the arrow at Naraka, killing him instantly. Later Lord Krishna reminds her of the boon she had sought as Bhudevi. The slaying of Naraka by Sathyabhama could also be interpreted as an indication that parents should not hesitate to punish their children when they stray onto the wrong path. The message of Naraka Chaturdasi is that the well being of society as a whole should always prevail over one's personal needs and loyalties.



Second day is Amavasya when Lakshmi puja is performed. It is believed that on this day Goddess Lakshmi will be in her most benevolent mood and fulfill the wishes of her devotees. One version says that it was on this day that Goddess Lakshmi emerged from the Paal Kadal (Ocean of Milk) when the Gods and demons were churning the kadal (ocean) for Amirtham or nectar.

Another version is that when Lord Vishnu in the guise of Vamana, sought three feet-size of land from the generous demon king Bali, the latter had to surrender his head as Vamana had con-

quered the earth and the sky in two strides. Lord Vishnu banishes Bali into the Pathala Loka (nether land) by placing his third stride on Bali's head. Later, pleased by his generosity, Lord Vishnu grants him a boon and he in turn requests the Lord himself serve as the guardian of Pathala loka. Meanwhile, the Goddess is unable to bear the separation and her grief affects the functioning of the entire universe. Brahma and Lord Shiva offer themselves as guards and plead with Bali to relieve Vishnu. So, on the Amavasya day, Lord Vishnu returns to his abode and Goddess Lakshmi is delight-

ed. It is believed that those who worship Goddess Lakshmi on this day will be bestowed with all riches. The third day is "Kartika Shudda Padyami." On this day Bali came out of Pathala Loka and ruled Bhuloka as per the boon given by Lord Vishnu. Hence, it is also known as "Bali Padyami". The fourth day is referred to as "Yama Dvitiya." On this day, sisters invite their brothers to their homes.

However, in the northern part of India Deepavali, known as Diwali, is celebrated as the return of Rama along with Sita and Lakshman from his 14 years of exile, after killing Ravana. To commemorate his return to Ayodhya, his subjects illuminated the kingdom and burst crackers.

For the Gujaratis, Marwaris and other business community Deepavali marks the worship of Goddess Lakshmi and also the beginning of the new financial year. For Bengalis, it is the time to worship Goddess Kali or Durga. The Goddess Durga continued her "Vilaya Tandava"(Devine Dance) even after killing Mahishaasura.

For the Jains, Deepavali has an additional significance. It is celebrated as the day Mahavira attained the eternal bliss of Nirvana. The passing into eternity on the same day of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi (that leonine Sanyasi who was one of the first to light the torch Hindu Renaissance during the last century and founder of the Arya Samaj Movement) and Swami Ramathirtha (who carried the fragrance of spiritual message of Hindu Dharma to the western world) have brought the national / spiritual tradition of Deepavali right up into modern times.

Deepavali is a festival where people from all age groups can participate. They give expression

to their happiness by lighting earthen 'Vilaku' (lamps), decorating their homes, bursting fire-crackers and inviting near and dear to their households for partaking in a sumptuous feast. The lighting of lamps is a way of paying obeisance to god for attainment of health, wealth, knowledge, peace, valor and fame.

It is the one time in the whole year that children volunteer to leave their beds long before the day begins. In fact, the traditional oil bath is usually held at 3 am! is the only chore that stands between them and the pre-dawn adventures? They emerge, scrubbed clean to get into their festive attire, and light up little oil lamps, candles and scented sticks (agarbathis), the wherewithal for setting alight crackers and sparklers.

Who shall set off the first chain of crackers that go boom, bang and vroom? And who is the owner of the 10-minute 'banger' that steals the thunder from your little chain of needle-sized crackers? Does the boy next door have more crackers than me?

Competition is stiff, and even the little girls in silk frocks and their finery are watching out for the best sparklers, flowerpots, rockets and Vishnuchakras, which light-up the night sky like a thousand stars. Grown-ups are the soul of generosity. Festive bonhomie abounds.

Deepavali is a wonderful day to change one's way of living to a new one. Children should be encouraged to make resolutions to become good ones. The elders too could change their way of life to better themselves. It is never too late to become a better person!!

By: Kumar Punithavel  
kumarpunithavel@yahoo.com

## Monsoon Kids Corner

### Color Me Competition - 8

Dead Line for entries:

October 25, 2008

Entries have to be made on original paper, photo copies not accepted.

The Winner will be selected and posted in the November issue.

Please mail to:

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Winners for September 2008

Color Me competition-7

Congratulations from

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\$10 will be mailed to

the winners.

Once again we have selected more winners for this issue too.

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Anjana Chandrakumar - Scarborough

Casius Noel. J - Mississauga

Karthehan. V - Scarborough

Bairavie Piravakaran - Scarborough

S. Marilyn Sabina - Scarborough

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Entry Form: October 2008

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# Monsoon Events

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## JAFFNA COLLEGE 185TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

The Jaffna College Alumni Association of Ontario has decided to celebrate the 185th year of establishment of the College with a dinner on the 25th of October, 2008 at the Radisson Hotel Toronto East. Professor S.T. Ariaratnam, Ph.d., D.Sc. (London), D.Sc. (Cantab), retired Head of the Faculty of Engineering, Waterloo University will be the Chief Guest to grace the occasion. He is also an Alumnus of the College. A few other persons of eminence will also be present at the occasion.

This gathering will be another opportunity for all in the alumni and well wishers to renew bonds of fellowship and love for their revered alma mater. In spite of all the present travails in Sri Lanka, especially in the North, the College is progressing in providing a wholesome education and keeping alive its spirit initiated 185 years ago. Satha Wijayanayagam is the Chairman, Celebrations Sub Committee for the Dinner. Further details can be obtained by contacting the following telephone numbers.

**Tel. 647 686 8773, 416 299 0672, 416 497 3956**

## wHat iF tHe rAin fAils

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## Women and youth equally vulnerable to heart attacks

### R. Sujatha

CHENNAI: When B. Krishnakumari, 47, walked into a private clinic in Royapuram complaining of chest pain the doctor advised an ECG. The readings were alarming, indicating that she had suffered a massive heart attack. She was advised to get admitted to Government Stanley Hospital.

There, she was given drugs to stabilise her condition. She will undergo a treadmill test before being discharged on Tuesday. Doctors will ask her to return to the hospital periodically to monitor her progress.

"I was careless in taking my BP medicines. I am a diabetic for nine years and have high BP for six years now," Ms. Krishnakumari says.

In the adjacent ward, a 29-year-old smoker, with a family history of diabetes and BP is recuperating from a heart attack. R. Subramanian, head of the cardiology department, says the hospital, which caters to the relatively less affluent population of north Chennai is regularly getting patients with coronary artery disease.

"Until 20 years ago, rheumatic heart disease, caused by streptococcus bacteria was common. Now, in a month, I see 4-5 cases. But, while the more educated are careful about what they eat, the poor have taken to junk food. Heart attack had become common at the age of 20 and 30," Dr. Subramanian says.

Profiling the youngsters who suffer heart attacks, he says they are generally smokers, with high lipid, cholesterol levels, a familial history of diabetes, very stressed and hypertensive.

Earlier, it was perceived that women were protected from heart attacks until menopause but now increasingly, younger women are also affected, he says.

"By 2020 India will lead in incidences of heart attack. Whoever has diabetes will be prone to heart attack. South Indians are genetically prone to heart blocks and heart attack," says K. Harshavardhan, head, Cardiology department, SRM Medical University.

"India is spending 15 per cent of its health budget on treating heart attacks. This can be brought down by creating awareness."

Pollution factor

As a cardiologist at the Government General Hospital from which he retired recently, he has operated on 20 auto drivers, he says.

"They smoke, drink alcohol, eat junk food and are stressed out. Pollution, particularly sulphur dioxide emission from vehicles and lack of exercise makes them susceptible to heart attacks."

According to statistics on the website of World Heart Federation, which has designated the last Sunday in September as World Heart Day, half of the 17.5 million people who die of heart disease and stroke every year are women.

Women, unlike men, exhibit symptoms such as chest or stomach aches, nausea, breathlessness and unexplained tiredness. Very often, they remain undiagnosed for these symptoms.

Maintaining a healthy weight would reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes doctors point out.

To keep away coronary artery disease, it is important to test for lipids and cholesterol, they say.

A routine of 30-45 minutes of brisk exercise such as walking, drinking lots of water, eating plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and reducing salt intake can help keep away heart attacks.

**Courtesy: The Hindu**



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Date: Friday November 21, 2008 @ 6:30 pm

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- Health forums - Seminars for health education and awareness for the Sri Lankan community in Canada.
- Funding through Providence Health Care foundation to develop a phone help line for the Sri Lankan community in Canada.
- Release of health education magazine-"Nalamthana" annually.
- Funding for CARE projects.
- Donation to Saivaithe council for spiritual counselling.
- Donation to The Tamil Nurse's Association project.
- Sponsored a lane at "Bowl a Thon" to raise fund for Tamil care giver projects through Providence care.
- Donation of Medical equipment, Library materials to Hospitals in Sri Lanka.
- Funding to refurbish Dental unit for Puttur mission hospital.
- Funding for medication supply for the displaced people in Sri Lanka.
- Funding for the Medical clinic in "Canada Tamil Oor" project for the displaced.

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## NOTICE

### Annual General Meeting- Notice and Nomination Form for the election of Directors and Internal Auditors 2008/2009

The CTCC Annual General Meeting will be held on November 8th, 2008 at 8:30AM at the Embassy Banquet Hall located at 5210 Finch Ave. East Unit# 11 and 12, Scarborough.

Breakfast will be served at 8:30AM and the Board proceedings will commence at 9:30AM. We expect the meeting to adjourn at 11AM.

Nomination Regulations:

Only paid members will be eligible to nominate or second a nomination.

The CTCC kindly requests you to renew your membership and take part in the AGM.

Nomination forms should be received before 6:00PM on Wednesday October 22nd, 2008.

Nominations for the CTCC Board of Directors are to be submitted to:

Nomination Committee,  
Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce

5200 Finch Avenue East, Suite 209

Scarborough, ON M1S 4Z4

As seating will be limited, please RSVP prior to November 1st, 2008 by calling or leaving a message at the chamber office at 416-335-9791, or e-mail webmaster@ctcc.ca

# SIVAJI, THE ORIGINAL BOSS OF TAMIL CINEMA

## REMEMBERED ON HIS 80TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

I have been attending the Birthday functions of NT for the last 3 years. But never have I seen such a huge crowd like the one that thronged the venue today. The Kalaingar Arangam at Anna Arivaalayam wore a festive look adorned by banners and posters on either side of the entrance and throughout the way to the auditorium. In fact the banners, posters and Sivaji Mandra Flags had been put up from Kamarajar Arangam till Arivaalayam. As I mentioned earlier the crowds coming from as far as Nagercoil, Bangalore, Andhra, Pazhani, Madurai, Vellore had come for the birthday function and even by 5.30 pm, the auditorium was full. The heartening aspect of the crowd was women numbered up to 40% of the crowd. Again youngsters comprised 35- 40% of the crowd.

The stage was decorated with the banner which had NT on the left and Kalaingar on the right. It read நடிகர் திலகத்தின் 80 -வது பிறந்த நாள் விழா, 01.10.2008. Two portraits of NT were placed on either side of the stage. All the dignitaries were seated by 6.15 pm and CM arrived by 6.20 pm and function started by 6.30 pm. By the time the function started the hall and the balcony were overflowing and it looked that an equal number of people were standing. But in spite of knowing that they had to stand, people still were coming in, not to mention a big crowd (without invitations) pleading with the police to allow them in.

Thamizh Thaa vaazhthu was rendered to mark the beginning. One of the MCs of the evening Y.Gee Mahendra came to the mike and announced that Ram Kumar would do the welcome address. The mood of the crowd was evident by the deafening applause one heard when Y.Gee mentioned NT's name. Ram welcomed everybody in his usual manner making it short and sweet. The next item was honouring the CM and the other speakers and Ram and Prabhu presented shawls and memento to Kalaingar, Sivakumar, Vairamuthu and Post Master General Mrs. Indira Krishnakumar on behalf of the trust. The act was repeated on behalf of Akila Indhiya Sivaji Mandram with its President Bhoominathan doing the honours. The next function was releasing of Postal cover in memory of Travancore sisters. Mohanram came to the mike and he gave a brief background to the whole exercise being done every year by the Sivaji - Prabhu Trust. Mohanram recalled that in the year 2000, when he suggested about the idea of bringing out the postal covers on cine personalities, NT not only responded favourably but also sponsored the entire programme and



Exclusive for Monsoon Journal by Murali Srinivasan, Chennai



Sivaji's sons Ramkumar, Prabhu with the chief guest CM Mu. Karunanithy while actor Sivakumar looks on.

made an announcement that it would be done on an annual basis. Though he was not there for the next year's

function, Ram and Prabhu have been carrying out the event with the same involvement as NT desired. Mohanram went on to list the names of legends of Tamil cinema in whose memory the postal covers have been brought out and the list included AV.Meiyappan, K.Subramaniam, MKT, PUC, MR.Radha, Chandrababu, Bheemasingh and MK.Radha to name a few. With this recap he said this time the trust has decided to bring out a special postal cover on Travancore sisters namely Lalitha, Padmini and Raagini. In order to highlight their contribution, clippings from the films in which they acted with NT were shown. It started with Lalitha. A scene from Thooku Thooki was shown. It was Lalitha and NT conversing with each other and crowd was reacting aggressively. For Raagini it was her song sequence in Uthama Puthiran but since there is no NT in the scene, the reaction was little

mild. Next was Padmini and her thillanaa was shown followed by Nalamthaana song. When NT winks his eyes, the crowd went berserk. It was a little disappointment that more clippings were not shown.

Post Master General Indira Krishnakumar released the postal covers and Kalaingar received it. Mohanram asked Lalitha's daughter Sethu Lakshmi and her son Krishna, Raagini's daughter Mahalakshmi and actor Vineeth to come to the stage for receiving the postal covers on behalf of Lalitha, Raagini and Padmini respectively. They came to the stage and received the covers. After this the Mrs. Indira spoke. She talked about Postal Department's initiative in honouring artists and said that the artists are great ambassadors who could bring diverse people into their fold that bodes well for the country. [Sorry could not reproduce her speech in full. Even otherwise it was low in volume. Because of security reasons, the mobile jammer was put in use and this was in a way affecting the performance of the mike].

After this the Sivaji Virudhu vazhangum programme started. The first one to receive was Mellisai Mannar T.K.Ramamurthy. Clippings from Thanga Surangam, the only film TKR had worked for NT was shown. It was Naan Pirandha Nattukku endha Naadu periyadhu song sequence. Seeing NT in a young and charming avatar, the crowd went wild and especially when NT briskly walks down the steps in his usual majestic manner, cheers become louder. Then the clipping for Chachhu was shown. It was the scene from Sumathi En Sundari where NT for the sake of Nagesh bluffs about Nagesh killing the man-eater Tiger and getting caught. Then it was the turn of Aroordas and the clipping was from Deiva Magan showing Kannan coming to meet his Father and handing over the blank cheque [my day was made]. There were claps, whistle and sounds for each and every reaction. K.R.Vijaya was the next and Saraswathy Sabatham scene starting with Deivam Iruppadhu Enge song ending and the subsequent war of words between NT and KRV were shown. Now people started reacting more aggressively and especially when NT retorts [selvaku solvakkai adakkalaama] the cheers were huge. Following this Nallathoru Kudumbam song started and crowd was on their feet. When SP Choudry after singing Annai ennum kadal thandhadhu, started his stylish light dance movements all hell broke loose. The crowd was dancing with deafening sounds. Saroja Devi's turn came and when people saw Gopal saying please followed by Unnai Ondru ketpen, there was no stopping the fans. Aalayamani starting scene was shown followed by Nadhi Enge Pogirathu from Iruvar Ullam. With the sound so deafening and fans seem to be on a high, police had to move in and take positions along the entire stretch to control the crowd. This brought some control and when Once More was shown, the cheers again started but were within limits. With this clippings came to an end.

All the dignitaries then were called up and presented the Sivaji Virudhu. TKR, Aroordas and Film News Anandan required help to walk and after all the six received the awards, a photo session was arranged for the dignitaries with the CM. With this the first part of the function came to an end.

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# Kollywood Film Review



by Anand. J  
**Poi Solla Porom**

Director Vijay's cross roads second venture Poi Solla Porom is Khosla Ka Ghosla meets Veedu. Only, it's neither as witty as Khosla nor as intense as Veedu. That apart, the movie is fun and enjoyable, with a slightly different storyline that has not been tried for a long time in Tamil cinema. With a decent cast that fits to the T, and its unpretentious, on-the-



face narration, the movie easily passes through as a perfect excuse for killing time without being bored to death. Finally, this is one movie that does not revolve around mushy romances or vengeful villains.

Nedumudi Venu is a middle class father who nurses the classic middle-class dream of owning a house. He purchases a plot with his hard-earned 30 lakhs with the help of real estate broker Hanifa. To his shock, on the day of the groundbreaking ceremony, he is

threatened by Nasser and a gang of his goons claiming ownership of the land. He eventually loses the ownership and settles down to his earlier life with much distress.

Karthik, Venu's son, is on the verge of flying to the US for employment and stumbles upon the visa agent Bosky who throws some light on this land-grabbing incident. Together, they (the entire family including Karthik's fiancé's family) hatch a plan to trap Nasser for his crookedness.

What follows is a series of incidents that keep you engaged until the movie reaches its lightweight, yet agreeable climax.

Poi Solla Porom is of course a story of suffering losses in life and wreaking vengeance. However, what makes the movie tick is its realistic script, making the entire process believable and close to real life.

Nedumudi Venu breathes life into his middle class father character with the support of Rajesh's

dubbing that often seems to takeover, giving you a feeling as if Rajesh himself is in the role. Now, that makes it two actors in one role! But this doesn't mean Nasser comes second - he's just as good as Venu. Be it a callous and fraudulent real estate contractor or a loser, Nasser shows different shades of emotions, not for a moment letting the grip of his character get out of hand. The effervescent and spontaneous Mouly is riotous while playing dumb - something that comes naturally to Cochin Haneefa - a quality that Malayalam movies cashed in.

M G Sreekumar definitely has a long way to go before he can tune songs for Tamil movies. For starters, he has to realize that Malayalam and Tamil film music are a world apart. Not to mention Gopi Sundar's background score, which is passable.

A neatly crafted screenplay, near-witty dialogues, and situations that are easy to relate with real life form the crux of Poi Solla Porom, making the movie more than just watchable.

**Verdict - Watch it, it's fun!**

## Raman Thediya Seethai

Cheran appears once again on screen after Pirivom Sandippom, this time he is directed by his protégé K P Jagannath in Moser Baer productions' Raman Thediya Seethai. As the title indicates, the film is all about the search of an apt soul mate for Cheran.

Cheran is an exceptionally brilliant boy who ranks 2nd in the state in the 10th standard exams. However this does not seem to please his mom who taunts him for not bagging the first position and his feat goes without being given due recognition. Though bogged down by this, he raises his bar too high to perform exemplary well in the 12th exam which eventually affects his mental health and he finds himself in Kilpauk Mental Hospital. Though he recovers and returns to normalcy, he does not find accept-

ance in the society which continues to treat him as a mentally ill person. As he is left with no option, he is not able to continue his studies and resigns to the fate of taking care of his dad's mediocre business of printing invitations.

As the years roll by, he reaches marriageable age and is in the process of scouting for a suitable bride. Not wanting to hide his past, Cheran reveals that he was in the mental asylum for some time and as expected this truth becomes a deterrent factor in his mission of getting married. He gets rejected and it takes three years for him to get married. In this process five women walk into his life and the film revolves around them and who accepts Cheran forms the rest of the story.

Pasupathy as the blind Radio Jockey does a brilliant job. His mannerisms and body language are par excellence. The movie is sure to be a landmark in his career. However, the natural

and Nithin Sathya, Nithin has perfectly enjoyed essaying his role and has delivered the best. Cheran's role requires him to evoke sympathy right from the beginning and beyond a point it starts getting a bit tiresome. Heroines have done their bit.

The director needs to be appreciated for delivering a film without kissing or glamorous scenes. However, he could have tried to make the subject a bit more interesting.

Music by Vidya Sagar is a big let down for the film.

Heavy sentiments and pathos drench the film which may not go down well with the youth. Perhaps, RTS may find some takers in newly weds and may be



sequences linked with Pasupathy get jarred with the artificially thrust fight scene and his character suffers a serious blow at that juncture.

The hospital scene where Cheran gets slapped by Manivannan when the former tries to hold Manivannan's grandchild moves the audience. Karunas' presence does not evoke any laughter.

Among Cheran, Pasupathy

liked by some patient souls. However it would be a strict no-no for those who adore commercial potboilers. The ray of hope comes in the form of ladies and other domestic audiences who enjoy the daily soaps on TV; they are likely to find this kind of a subject and narration suitable to their tastes.

**Verdict - Has its chances if soap lovers show up**

*Intha Punnagai Enna Vilai?*



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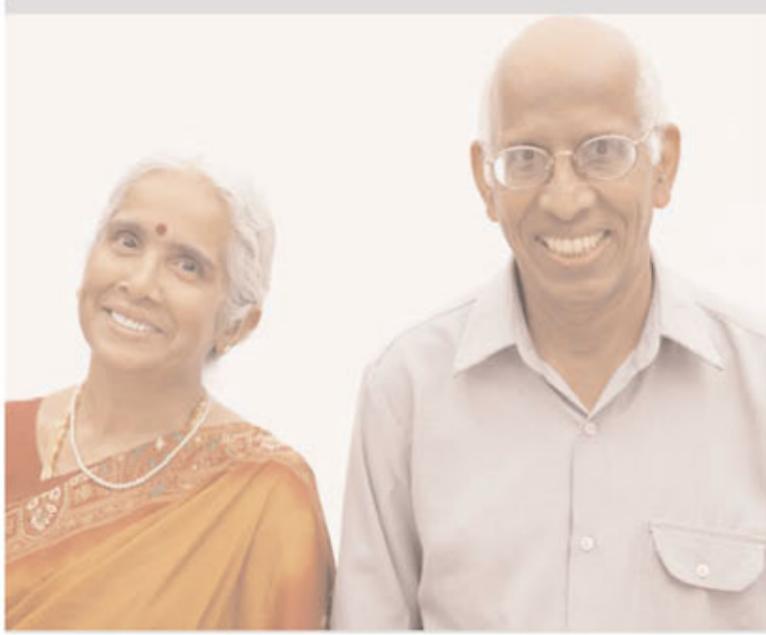
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