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# Monsoon Journal

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## 'We acknowledge that the situation for Tamils in Sri Lanka continues to be difficult' – Minister Jason Kenney

Hon. Jason Kenney, the federal Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, visited The Globe and Mail editorial board on Monday, Nov 1st. He met with the newspaper on the government's new legislation regarding "refugee claimants" and "human smuggling", and the recent situation with refugees coming from Sri Lanka.

During the meeting Minister Jason Kenney said, "We acknowledge that the situation for Tamils in Sri Lanka continues to be difficult ... We are also working with UNHCR, Australia and other international partners on the possibility of what we call a regional protection framework, which would allow for greater opportunities for protection and re-settlement."

He also emphasized that the Canadian public "want an immigration system that's characterized by the principle of the rule of

law and fairness." The minister also said according to their research the public is in clear condemnation of "human smuggling" and the current process of refugee determination and this "feeling is strongest among new Canadians".

Minister Jason Kenney further said, "I believe that these migrants have mixed motives for coming to Canada: some are primarily economic migrants, some may well be bona-fide refugees ... and some of them have a mix of economic and political reasons ... I should say contextually, that since the cessation of hostilities in Sri Lanka, some 100,000 Sri Lankan refugees living in Tamil Nadu, India, have since voluntarily returned to Sri Lanka. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has facilitated the voluntary return of many Sri Lankans living with temporary status in southeast Asian nations. The Canadian Border Services



Agency has done a survey which indicated that a majority of successful Tamil asylum seekers in Canada have subsequently returned, at least for visits, to the country where they allegedly feared persecution."

## 'Government capitalizes on misunderstandings' –

Mark Holland MP (Ajax – Pickering) See Pg 19

## Nov 11: Tribute and honour on Remembrance Day

See Pg 4



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## Toiletry Drive by DTA

Toiletry Drive for the abused women and children of HERIZON HOUSE was hosted by Durham Tamil Association. A fun filled evening for the ladies who donated over 180 pieces of toiletries to the abused women in need. The donations were received by Ms. Jennifer Carroll, Administrative Support of HERIZON HOUSE - Ajax.



## Durham Tamil Association Halloween Spookfest 2010

DTA's YOUTH and EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE members at the SPOOKY HALLOWEEN NIGHT



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# Hudak Discusses Ideas to Restore Opportunity in Ontario with Tamil Community Leaders



Ontario PC Leader Tim Hudak met with members of the Tamil community recently to discuss the impact of Dalton McGuinty's high taxes, red tape and hydro bills on families and businesses. Hudak also discussed three key priorities the Ontario PC Caucus is focusing on this fall.

These priorities are defending the family budget, fighting Dalton McGuinty's costly energy schemes and eliminating government waste. Hudak asked the Tamil community leaders for their advice on these and other important issues, and he encouraged the Tamil community to participate in the Ontario PC Caucus survey at [www.HaveYourSay](http://www.HaveYourSay)

Ontario.ca.

Hudak also discussed ideas contained in his private member's bill, the Newcomers Employment Opportunities Act, which will help New Canadians find employment and create jobs.

"The Ontario PC Caucus understands that we get the best advice straight from families. That's why we launched our Have Your Say, Ontario survey. We know families don't have an endless ability to pay for new taxes and new fees to fund runaway government spending, and so we're looking for their best advice on what kinds of relief work best for them."

--Ontario PC Leader Tim



Hudak

"I believe we must do more to restore Ontario's culture of opportunity that has attracted so many families from around the world to

Ontario. This requires a realistic and affordable plan to grow our economy and create jobs that are based on a level playing field where everybody gets a fair chance."

-- Tim Hudak, Ontario PC Leader

· Have Your Say, Ontario is the largest survey of its kind in Ontario. The survey asks a series of 54 questions seeking advice on how we can best provide families with real tax relief, focus government on the services that matter most, and create good, private sector jobs. You can participate by visiting [www.HaveYourSayOntario.ca](http://www.HaveYourSayOntario.ca).

· Since coming to office,

Dalton McGuinty has brought in the largest income tax increase (Health Tax) and the largest sales tax increase (HST) in Ontario history. Ontario's auto insurance rates and tuition fees are the highest in Canada. Its hydro rates are also among the highest.

· A recent report found that Dalton McGuinty's failed energy policies and HST will cost Ontario families another \$732 a year on their energy bills within the next five years. Hydro bills have already increased 75 percent under Dalton McGuinty.

CONTACT: Sarah McMaster | 416-325-8505 | [sarah.mcmaster@pc.ola.org](mailto:sarah.mcmaster@pc.ola.org)

## Lights of Healing Annual Gala - Bowlathon 2010

Canadian Medical Dental Development Association (CMDA) is proud to announce the details of their annual fundraiser event for this year - Lights of Healing 2010 Bowlathon on Saturday November 13th.

This year the proceeds will be going to the Development of a Tamil wing and Tamil resident meal and other support programs at Seven Oaks long-term care homes (Neilson and Ellesmere) owned and operated by the city of Toronto.

The format of this event is going to be different this year in which participants can bring their family/group and bowl, enjoy the dinner and mingle with the group.

CMDA invites all to join in to support this event to empower lives of Tamil seniors in this home and to pave way to improve long

term care access for the Tamil community in the future.

CMDDA states that their commitment to support post war rehabilitation in Sri Lanka through MIFT is ongoing. Building a mental health unit in Mannar is the last major project MIFT completed. Every one is welcome to talk to CMDDA members for project updates in Sri Lanka.

CMDDA is looking forward to all of your support in this venture to make this event successful.

Contact: Dr Santhakumar & Board of directors/Organizing committee,

Tel: 905-283-6895

Event details:

Saturday November 13th 2010, At 6pm

Thornccliffe Bowlerama  
45 Overlea Blvd, Toronto  
416 421 3648

## Minister Kenney and Minister Toews issue Statement on Arrests in Thailand

The Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, and the Honourable Vic Toews, the Minister of Public Safety, issued the following statement on behalf of the Government of Canada:

"These arrests under Thai immigration laws are a reminder that human smuggling operators have also used Thailand as a transit country to target Canada's immigration system. The Government of Canada is working closely with authorities in transit

countries, such as Thailand, to detect and disrupt human smuggling operations before they reach Canada. While we will not comment on specific operational practices, stronger cooperation with authorities in transit countries such as Thailand is part of the Government of Canada's overall strategy to prevent human smugglers from abusing Canada's immigration system. These arrests are a reminder that the threat to our immigration system is real."

## Ontario Seeks to Strengthen Canada's Retirement Income System

### McGuinty Government Consults On A More Secure Retirement

Ontario is taking the next step to strengthen retirement income security by releasing the discussion paper "Securing our Retirement Future: Consulting with Ontarians on Canada's Retirement Income System." It outlines the challenges facing Ontarians and all Canadians who are seeking a stable and secure retirement income and the options available to them.

The discussion paper is part of a plan that includes:

· Modernizing Ontario's Pension Benefits Act to enhance reliability, security and affordability of employment-based defined benefit plans.

· Supporting a modest and gradual increase to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) to ensure that all Canadians have an improved pension.

· Working with other governments and pension partners to develop new and innovative ways for Canadians to save for retire-

ment.

Input received will contribute to Ontario's position at the federal-provincial-territorial finance ministers' meeting on December 20, 2010.

Ontario's plan to strengthen the retirement income system is part of the Open Ontario plan to create jobs and enhance the quality of life for all Ontarians.

"More and more Ontarians are concerned about their income when it comes to retirement. Our goal is to enhance the potential for all Canadians to achieve an affordable and secure retirement. I look forward to receiving the input of Ontarians on how they would improve our current system to make it even stronger."

– Dwight Duncan  
Minister of Finance

"CARP members will be pleased to know that the Minister is taking action on the pension reform file. CARP is privileged to host the Minister and to give

CARP members attending our AGM from across the country the opportunity to hear directly from the Minister about his plans to improve retirement security."

– Susan Eng

Vice President, Advocacy for CARP

Feedback and suggestions on the discussion paper should be provided before November 30, 2010 via [pension.feedback@ontario.ca](mailto:pension.feedback@ontario.ca)

The discussion paper "Securing our Retirement Future: Consulting with Ontarians on Canada's Retirement Income System" is part of the McGuinty government's multi-phase approach to reform the retirement income system.

Other actions include: establishing an Expert Commission on Pensions, a research study on the Canadian Retirement Income System, the Pension Benefits Amendment Act, 2010, and introducing Bill 120, Securing Pensions Now and for the Future Act, 2010.

## Recognition of the Tamil Canadian Community

Derek Lee, Member for Scarborough – Rouge River, rose in the House today to recognize the many important contributions made by Tamil Canadians to this nation. This is a transcript of his words:

"Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak about the contributions made by the Tamil community to the fabric that makes up our multicultural nation.

This cultural community has forged roots across the country and has excelled in all areas of Canadian endeavour. Since the

1940s, when the first Tamils immigrated here, the community has grown to about a ¼ million. Canadian Tamils are teachers, entrepreneurs, bankers, doctors, researchers, lawyers, engineers, professors, athletes, corporate executives and other such occupations. Education is highly revered in the community and more than 5000 Tamil Canadian students are currently pursuing post secondary education in Ontario alone. Their businesses are part of the infrastructure of our communities and provide

goods, services and jobs.

Recognizing the burdens imposed by a violent 30 year homeland conflict, it is time that this important community is recognized for its full contribution to our country and that steps be taken to ensure that the image of Tamil Canadians is no longer tarnished by hurtful and false stereotypes. Such negative stereotyping in our media or in political discourse is hurtful and unhelpful in our grand Canadian enterprise."

Contact: The Office of Derek Lee, M.P.: (613) 996-9682

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- Thirukkural # 989**

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## From the Publisher's Desk ... Nov 11: Tribute and honour on Remembrance Day

**Krishni Loganathan,  
BA (Hons.)**

Let us never forget the over 66, 000 Canadians that sacrificed their life in World War I. Let us never forget the more than 42,000 families that lost their children in World War II. Let us never forget the Battle of Vimy Ridge, Battle of Ypres, the 516 Canadians that gave their life in the Korean War, and the hundreds of other Canadians that played a vital role throughout times of war and peace. Let us never forget Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson for his peacekeeping role in The Suez Crisis which won him the Noble Peace Prize in 1957 for his efforts. Let us finally never forget the strength and commitment

that the Canadian soldiers have endured and continue to endure in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world fighting for freedom, democracy and peace.

November 11th marks Remembrance Day in Canada or also known as Armistice Day, when the armistice was signed between the Allies and Germany to conclude World War I in 1918. On the 11th month, the 11th day and the 11th hour we hold silence and extend our heartfelt gratitude for all those who have served us, and continue to serve us for a better life. The official national ceremonies are held at the National War Memorial in our nation's capital Ottawa.

The Governor General of



Canada plays a symbolic role as former Governor General; Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, participated in the ceremonies placing a wreath on behalf of Canada.

This year His Excellency the Right Honourable David Lloyd

Johnston, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief in and over Canada since October 1st, 2010 will be taking part in the ritual activities that take place on Remembrance Day.

On November 11th let us remember and express our admiration and pride towards our fallen soldiers and the ones that continue to serve our beautiful country. Let us bow our head in respect to the brave Canadian men and women who are serving our nation with dignity and honour.

Monsoon Journal joins hands in commemorating Remembrance Day and honouring the Canadian men and women that continue to serve our exceptional nation.

## Pity the nation that has to silence its writers for speaking their minds

**By Arundhati Roy**

(October 26, 2010) I write this from Srinagar, Kashmir. This morning's papers say that I may be arrested on charges of sedition for what I have said at recent public meetings on Kashmir.

I said what millions of people here say every day.

I said what I, as well as other commentators have written and said for years.

Anybody who cares to read the transcripts of my speeches will see that they were fundamentally a call for justice.

I spoke about justice for the people of Kashmir who live under one of the most brutal military occupations in the world; for Kashmiri Pandits who live out the tragedy of having been driven out of their homeland; for Dalit soldiers killed in Kashmir whose graves I visited on garbage heaps in their villages in Cuddalore; for the Indian poor who pay the price of this occupation in material ways and who are now learning to live in the terror of what is becoming a police state.

Yesterday I travelled to Shopian, the apple-town in South Kashmir which had remained closed for 47 days last year in protest against the brutal rape and murder of Asiya and Nilofer, the young women whose bodies were found in a shallow stream near their homes and whose murderers have still not been brought to justice.

I met Shakeel, who is Nilofer's husband and Asiya's brother. We sat in a circle of people crazed with grief and anger who had lost hope that they would ever get



Arundhati Roy

'insaf' — justice — from India, and now believed that Azadi — freedom — was their only hope. I met young stone pelters who had been shot through their eyes. I travelled with a young man who told me how three of his friends, teenagers in Anantnag district, had been taken into custody and had their finger-nails pulled out as punishment for throwing stones.

In the papers some have accused me of giving 'hate-speeches,' of wanting India to break up. On the contrary, what I say comes from love and pride. It comes from not wanting people to be killed, raped, imprisoned or have their finger-nails pulled out in order to force them to say they are Indians. It comes from wanting to live in a society that is striving to be a just one.

Pity the nation that has to silence its writers for speaking their minds. Pity the nation that needs to jail those who ask for justice, while communal killers, mass murderers, corporate scammers, looters, rapists, and those who prey on the poorest of the poor, roam free.

## TamilCanadian.com marks re-launching of web portal



Prof. Cheran



Stewart Bell



Gary Anandasangaree

TamilCanadian.com – The web portal featuring news and information in English is now re-launched with new features, a new menu structure including a Tamil section and is geared for publishing advertisements as well.

A re-launch event was held on Thursday, Oct 28, 2010 at the J&J Banquet Hall.

TamilCanadian.com was started fourteen years ago by three concerned Carlton University under-graduates to provide news about developing events in Sri Lanka and the ongoing ethnic conflict, filling a vacuum that existed then in the delivery of such news on the World Wide Web.

In addition to news, the web portal has now sections for Tamil News, Eelam, Canada, Events, Memory of the Day, Articles, Thirukural, Obituaries, and carries a business directory and adver-

tisements.

Among the speakers were keynote speaker Prof. R Cheran of the University of Windsor, Journalist Stewart Bell of The National Post, Lawyer Gary Anandasangaree, Ken Kirupa Past President, Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce, Mike Ahilan, President, Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce, Speaker, TGTE, Pon Balarajan, Sarujan Kanapathipillai and Dr. Meera Selvakone of Canadian Tamil Congress, Abi Singam of Canadian HART and Sutha Balasubramaniam one of the founders of TamilCanadian.com. Aswin Balamohan emceed the whole event.

Other founding partners of TamilCanadian.com team: Raje Rajaratnam, Sivanathan Sabaratnam and Kalathan Yoganathan (could not be at re-launch).

# New MRI Will Reduce Wait Times In Hamilton Area

McGuinty Government Improving Access To Diagnostic Scans



Hamilton-area patients will soon benefit from reduced wait times with a new MRI machine at Hamilton Health Sciences.

The new MRI is the fourth at the hospital and will provide patients with 3,120 scans every year. It is scheduled to begin operating for 40 hours a week beginning May, 2011. It will help Hamilton Health Sciences reduce wait times for the scans and make it easier for people who need an MRI scan to get tested and treated more quickly.

Today's announcement is part of the government's Open Ontario Plan to provide more access to health care services while improving quality and accountability for patients.

"I'm determined to increase access to MRIs in large urban areas like Hamilton. That's why I'm glad we're able to fund a fourth MRI at Hamilton Health Sciences. I know how important this is to the Hamilton community."

– Deb Matthews

Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"I'm excited that our community will have better access to health services. This new MRI at Hamilton Health Sciences means shorter wait times and improved patient care for the people of Hamilton."

– Sophia Aggelonitis

MPP Hamilton Mountain

"I am so pleased that Hamilton Health Sciences will be

able to provide more MRI scans to patients who need them with this new machine. It's an important investment for this community."

– Ted McMeekin

MPP Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale

"The announcement of a new MRI for our hospital will increase our capacity to deliver better health care services for our patients and will assist us in reducing our wait times."

– Murray Martin

CEO of Hamilton Health Sciences

"This is great news for patients and families in the HNHB LHIN and beyond. Today's announcement means faster diagnosis of an ailment, which leads to faster treatment, close to home. Hamilton Health Sciences serves not only residents of this LHIN but also those from the Waterloo Wellington LHIN - this is a great day for thousands of patients."

– Donna Cripps

CEO of Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network

There are currently 78 MRI machines operating in Ontario's hospitals.

There have been 22 more MRI machines approved for operation since 2003.

There are currently three MRI machines operating at Hamilton Health Sciences that perform approximately 12,000 scans per year.

Town hosting Open House to encourage residents to get engaged in their community and their local government. The Town of Richmond Hill is reaching out to engage its citizens – calling for people who are interested in becoming citizen members on local committees.

"We are looking for people who have a passion to participate in their community," said Mayor Dave Barrow. "And we know there are lots of them out there." The Mayor points to the Town's recent civic engagement project, People Plan Richmond Hill where more than 2,000 people shared their goals

municipality or local board. The committees seeking citizen members are:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Committee of Adjustment
- Heritage Richmond Hill
- Mayor's Endowment for the Arts Application Review Committee
- Oak Ridges Community Centre and Park Project Steering Committee
- Property Standards Committee
- Richmond Hill Heritage Centre Advisory Committee
- Richmond Hill Public Library Board



unteer and we will be flooded with applications," said the Mayor. "Richmond Hill includes people of all ages and diverse backgrounds and we want to ensure that everyone is given the chance to participate." Application forms are available at the Clerk's Office on the Ground Floor at the Town's Municipal Offices, Monday to Friday during regular business

# Town Looking for Community-Minded Residents

and aspirations for the community. "We know there is a desire among citizens to have meaningful involvement in their neighbourhoods."

An open house on November 10, 2010 will provide attendees with an opportunity to learn about the role of citizen members and the issues considered by each committee or board. Becoming a citizen member of a committee offers people the chance to meet their neighbours, work with Councillors, share their expertise, learn new skills, help Council as they guide the Town and work together to build the community.

To be eligible to participate as a committee member, applicants must be a Richmond Hill resident and/or a property owner, a Canadian citizen, 18 years of age or older, and not employed by the



• Road Watch Committee  
The Citizen Committee Open House will be held:

Wednesday, November 10, 7 – 9 p.m.

Municipal Offices, 225 East Beaver Creek Road, Committee Room 2

"In keeping with our commitment to being open and transparent, for the first time we decided to host an Open House in the hopes that more people will learn about the different opportunities to vol-

hours, and 24/7 at RichmondHill.ca. Applications are due November 18, 2010.

Information regarding the mandate and meeting times of each committee is also available on the website. Questions about citizen appointments should be directed to Gloria Collier, Deputy Clerk, at 905-747-6363 or by email to gcollier@richmondhill.ca.

Contact: Mayor Dave Barrow, 905-771-2493, dbarrow@richmondhill.ca

# Training More Doctors To Increase Access To Care McGuinty Government Creates 75 New Residency Positions

Ontario is increasing access to medical specialists -- like surgeons and psychiatrists -- by creating 75 specialty residency positions at the province's medical schools.

The new post-graduate specialty residency positions will ensure that Ontarians have access to more highly skilled specialists, which are in growing demand across the province. The new postgraduate specialty spaces will be phased in over five years. The first residents will start training in the summer of 2011.

With this announcement the number of postgraduate specialty training positions will have increased by more than 80 per cent since 2003.

Training more doctors is part of the government's Open Ontario Plan to provide more access to health care services while improving quality and accountability for patients.

"We've been steadily increasing the number of doctors in



Ontario over the last six years - there are more now than ever before. With these new medical school spaces, we're making sure that more doctors can get the specialized training they need. This means Ontarians who need more complex care will get even better access to the health care system."

– Deb Matthews

Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"We're pleased to see the government increasing the number of postgraduate training positions to keep pace with rising medical

school enrolment. We look forward to the opportunities the government is creating for us to train as specialists and help meet the future health care needs of Ontarians."

– Ontario Medical Students Association

More than one million Ontarians who didn't have access to a family doctor in 2003 now have the care they need.

By 2014, more than twice as many doctors will be graduating from Ontario's medical schools than in 2003.

## Senior Tamils move to new location

Senior Tamils Society of Peel (STSP) is pleased to inform that it has moved to a new premises.

New Address:

3050 Confederation Parkway, Unit 205

Mississauga

ON L5B 3Z6

Contact:

E mail: subbiah\_mahes@yahoo.com

Tel: 905-290-3000

Mr. S. Santhiyapillai, President (STSP)

647-929-1643



In a joint letter, the International Crisis Group, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have declined the invitation of Sri Lanka's Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) to appear before it. The Sri Lankan government is promoting the Commission as an independent mechanism for reconciliation and restorative justice after its decades-long civil war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), yet the Commission fails to meet basic standards and is fatally flawed in structure and practice.

# Crisis Group Refuses to Appear Before Sri Lanka's "Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission"

Critically, there is no requirement that the Commission investigate the many credible allegations that both the government security forces and the LTTE committed war crimes during the final months of conflict last year, as detailed in Crisis Group's May 2010 report War Crimes in Sri Lanka.

In its two months of hearings to date, the Commission's members, many of them retired senior government employees, have made no attempt to question the government's version of events and have instead offered current officials a platform for continued misrepresentations of the facts.

These failings are reinforced by the absence of any provisions for the protection of witnesses to alleged crimes - a particularly crippling factor given that government officials have labeled as "traitors" Sri Lankans who have made claims or provided evidence of violations of international humanitarian law by government forces.

Appearing before Sri Lanka's LLRC under current circumstances could put witnesses at risk and lend legitimacy to a process that is neither a credible investigation nor an adequate or genuine process to address the decades of violence that Sri Lankans from all



regions and communities have suffered. The growing authoritarianism of the government since the end of the war - exhibited most recently by the removal of presidential term limits and any remaining independence of commissions on human rights, police

and elections - would make it difficult for even the best-intentioned commission of inquiry to make a meaningful contribution to political reconciliation or accountability now.

Crisis Group continues to call for an independent international inquiry as the only credible means to examine allegations of war crimes by government forces and the LTTE and urges the government of Sri Lanka to cooperate fully with the panel of experts appointed to advise the United Nations Secretary-General on issues of post-war accountability in Sri Lanka.

## Funds and access problems hinder commencement of major livelihood support programmes for widows

Tens of thousands of war widows cannot be reached due to a lack of funds, say officials, despite efforts to help them adjust to life after the conflict in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

There are 89,000 widows in the north and east, Mohamed Hizbullah, the deputy minister for child development and women's affairs, told IRIN.

"Where do we find money to restore livelihoods? My ministry does not have the needed funds to do this... Funds are our biggest problem to commence major support programmes for widows."

He said the government was providing 800 women in the eastern town of Batticaloa with self-employment training. The programme would be expanded to nearby Kilinochchi by the end of the year, he added.

The UN Industrial

Development Organization has put aside US\$800,000 to fund microcredit and small business support to widows.

"There is a huge need for providing sustainable livelihoods for thousands of widows and we are doing our best," said the agency's national programme coordinator, Sarath Abeysundara.

Access problems

More than 17 months after the decades-long civil conflict was declared over, accessing all the widows is proving difficult.

One factor is the lack of comprehensive data on the numbers of widows, said Ivan Rasia, a senior officer with the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Vijayamoorthy Inbany, 40, lost her husband due to shelling in February 2009 in the northern district of Mullaitivu in the final

months of fighting between the separatist group, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and the government.

"We are struggling to live each day. We have no jobs and no men to help us out. My daughter and I both live on government [bi-weekly food] assistance," she said. Inbany says she does not have much hope for herself or her family. "In many ways, society does not accept widows and remarriage is not even an option."

Savithri Wijesekera, executive director of Colombo-based NGO Women in Need, said widows' needs outstripped available services. "It is a challenge, especially in the case of Sri Lanka when two generations are simultaneously widowed."

Even convincing people that women need special attention after a conflict has been hard for



Vijayamoorthy Inbany lost her husband in 2009 - pic: Udara Soysa/IRIN

her organization, she added.

A recent World Food Programme food security assessment of internally displaced persons (IDPs) living with host families in the northern Jaffna District showed most of them depended on food rations.

The total IDP population in host families is almost 15,000 people; some 16 percent of the households are female-headed and 9 percent are widowed, according to local government officials.

The government has vowed to resettle all IDPs - now numbering fewer than 19,000 by its late October count - by the end of 2010.

More than 280,000 people fled fighting between government and LTTE forces who had been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland for almost three decades. The conflict was declared officially over on 18 May 2009.

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# Sri Lanka North crying out for more private investment



**MONSOON NEWSLINES**

density - 70 people per square kilometre - and the dependence on agriculture for food and livelihoods, agriculture can help kick-start the regional economy, Sarvananthan said.

by IRIN News

More private investment, especially in agriculture, is urgently needed in Sri Lanka's former conflict zone in the north to lift the local population out of dependence, say experts.

"Private investments are very important to wean away the people from over 25 years of dependence on relief and welfare hand-outs from the government, NGOs, donors, et al, and steer them towards self-sustenance,"

Muttikrishna Saravanathan, lead researcher at the Point Pedro Institute of Development [ <http://pointpedro.org/> ] based in the northern city of Jaffna, told IRIN. "If not, the Vanni will remain a perpetual basket case."

Tens of thousands of people displaced during the decades-long civil war that ended in May 2009 have returned to Vanni District, northern Sri Lanka, an area formerly under control of the now-defeated Liberation Tigers of



**Housing grants for returning IDPs are being used instead to set up businesses like this one in the south of Kilinochchi - pic: Amantha Perera/IRIN**

Tamil Eelam. But more than a year on, private investment has been slow to follow suit.

Finance for most of the local economy in Vanni comes from the public sector or donors. "Public administration, defence, and transfer payments from NGOs and bilateral and multilateral donors account for over 80 percent of the local economy. The agriculture, industry and service sectors account for less than 20 percent," said Saravanathan.

Returning civilians received US\$225 from the UN, through the government, to help build semi-permanent shelters until more permanent housing is established. But some of that money had been used for other things.

"I used the money to start this [fruit stand] because there was nothing else to do," Thangavel Gowrinathan, a young fruit vendor from Darmapuram in the far-north district of Kilinochchi. He said if he used the all of the grant to set up a shelter, he and his family of three could starve - if assistance provided by the World Food Programme (WFP) and other donors ended.

Government and relief agencies have targeted agricultural and industrial revitalization as key to sparking the region's economy.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said it was a "race against time" to ready the agriculture sector in Vanni for harvest after the monsoon rains end, typically in October. While most of the paddy land has been demined, planting has not begun due to lack of seeds and equipment.

As a result, officials are setting lower targets for the upcoming harvest.

"We will be using around 48,000 acres [80 percent of total acreage] for cultivation this season [in Kilinochchi District]," said district official, Roopavathi Ketheeswaran.

Given Vanni's low population

The little private investment there is, favours industry, he added. Several garment factories are set to open in the districts of Jaffna and Vavuniya. Ketheswaran said initial plans have been drafted to open a garment factory with private sector funding in Kilinochchi.

While the return to Vanni of more than 200,000 people fleeing fighting since December 2009 has brought with it rapid improvements to the road network, poor telecommunications and intermittent power supplies in the region are driving away potential investors, Saravanathan said.

## Library in Sri Lanka North 'vandalised'

BBC

The historic Jaffna public library in Sri Lanka has been closed to tourists a week after a large group of visitors vandalised it.

BBC News, quoting independent reports about the situation further said:

"The library reportedly vandalised by a large group of Sinhalese visitors.

Information does not flow freely from northern Sri Lanka, but sources in Jaffna say a large group of tourists from the ethnic majority Sinhalese community arrived in buses from the south and asked permission to enter the facility on 23 October.

Guards tried to turn them away as the library was hosting a medical seminar. The tourists reacted by running amok, breaking some of the shelves and throwing books on the ground. There were also reports that they vandalised plants by a statue of a prominent Tamil

politician. Reports said the security forces had difficulty calming the situation.

The Jaffna public library has emotional significance for the Tamils of northern Sri Lanka. Organised Sinhalese mobs attacked and burnt it over two days in mid-1981, reportedly with the connivance of the security forces. Recent governments have sponsored its careful restoration.

Senior members of the current government have denounced what happened and also apologised, although they have also said the then governing party - now the main opposition party - was to blame.

Very large numbers of Sinhalese tourists now visit Jaffna. Some local Tamils resent the overcrowding and what they see as a triumphalist attitude in some of the visitors. But Sinhalese people say they need not apologise for visiting all parts of the reunified island."

## Colombo Archbishop elevated as Cardinal

Archbishop of Colombo the Most Rev Dr Malcolm Ranjith has been elevated to the position of Cardinal by His Holiness Pope Benedict the xvi th. He will be anointed as Cardinal by the Pontiff at the Vatican on November 20.

The announcement of the elevation of Archbishop Malcolm Ranjith as Cardinal was made by the Pope at his weekly appearance before the faithful at St Peter's Square yesterday.

A Cardinal is eligible to be elected Pope and also to take part in the conclave to elect a Pontiff. Archbishop Dr Malcolm Ranjith is only the second Sri Lankan after the late Thomas Cooray to be anointed Cardinal.

Malcolm Ranjith was born in Polgahawela to Don William and Mary Winifreda. He studied at

the De La Salle College in Mutwal before entering St. Aloysius Seminary in Borella in 1965.

From 1966 to 1970, he pursued studies in theology and philosophy at the National seminary in Kandy.

He was thereafter sent by the then Archbishop Thomas Cardinal Cooray to further his priestly studies in Rome, he graduated from the Pontifical Urbanian University with a baccalaureate in theology(B.TH).

On June 29, 1975, Malcolm Ranjith was ordained to the priesthood by Pope Paul VI in St. Peter's Basilica. He then pursued post graduate studies at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, from where he obtained a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture in 1978; his thesis centered on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

During his time at the Biblical Institute, he studied under Carlo Martini and Albert Vanhoye (both future cardinals), he also attended the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where he undertook scriptural research as a post grad scholar.



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# Work and Retirement Related Issues

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

## Returning To Work

By: Dr. J. Douglas Salmon, Jr.

Upon returning to work after injury or illness, it is common for a person to feel apprehensive and nervous. The person may feel particularly concerned about changes in the work place, embarrassment, and his or her ability to do the job because of some remaining ongoing symptoms or disability. When returning, it is important to let your employer know that while you are going to try your best, you may still have some ongoing symptoms and that you might need a little time before you are able to work up to full speed, even in a modified job. It is important to communicate this message to your employer in a way that will not put him or her off, but that will encourage him or her to be supportive of you and to understand your situation and your needs. Some other strategies to keep in mind are as follows:

Keep in as good physical shape as you can before going to work so that returning to an eight hour work day will not be a big shock to your system.

Try to pace yourself in work activities to avoid burning out.

Anticipate problems that you may have and ask for help; consider trading tasks with a colleague, or discuss other possible solutions with your boss.

Use relaxation techniques, stretching, and other strategies to try to better cope with symptoms that build up over the course of the day.

Try to gradually build up stamina in terms of your work pace and the number and types of activities that you take on. Gradually increase your speed, stamina, and eventually take on more physical demands.

If you find yourself feeling fearful of a certain machine or situation (e.g., working from heights or climbing) which may relate to the cause of your accident, then try gradually approaching these work conditions, and/or be certain other people are near you to ensure your safety. If you find that you are unable to gradually overcome these fears, and then contact your family physician and/or a mental health professional.

**Addressing Your Needs When Not Working**

While a benefits check can make up for lost income that occurs due to injury, it cannot make up for the sense of pride, accomplishment, social satisfaction, and sense of life purpose that goes with working. People who are retired, unemployed, or disabled often become anxious, depressed, or irritable and may feel a sense of despair as a result of being out of the workplace. The following suggestions are important strategies to use to give your life purpose and meaning, as well as to keep you occupied in a positive way while you are not involved in paid work activities.

**Do Volunteer Work:** This can be extremely important and may meet many of the needs that your responsibilities at work previously satisfied. Many communities have a volunteer bureau or center which gathers various types of volunteer opportunities in the community. Various publications provide lists of organizations that seek volunteers to participate in activities such as Meals on Wheels, hospital visits, boy/girl scouts, and international development agencies. Volunteer jobs can include any activity from visit-



ing another person who is elderly or ill, to becoming a member of a Board of Directors, doing clerical work, or assisting in a fund raising campaign. Consult your local volunteer bureau for more information about the opportunities for volunteer work in your area.

Maintain a physical fitness program at home or at a fitness center.

Join a club.

Get involved in sports and hobbies.

Spend more time with friends and family.

Take a school related course or interest course. Older adults are often eligible for free community college and university courses, while younger people may audit courses meaning that they can attend lectures without having to take exams, usually at a reduced price or for free. High schools as well as parks and recreation departments of towns and cities often have very good courses in, for example, cooking, arts and crafts, photography, automotive care, and computers.

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# Top Nine Nutrition Myths

"Eat this not that." "Stay away from carbs!", "Fats make you fat." We hear these statements repeatedly in conversation. We see it on television and read about it in newspapers and magazines. We are bombarded with so much overwhelming information, that it often becomes difficult to differentiate between what's true and what isn't. Countless experts and their studies and research drown us with statistics and experiments, adding more scepticism and confusion. Below are a few common nutrition myths that will hopefully provide clarity into what is "proper" nutrition, and guide you to make better food choices for a healthy lifestyle.

## Myth #1- "Fear the fats!"

Well, there is no need to fear fats, because the good news is that not all fats are bad for you. There are the good, bad and evil fats. The good ones are the monounsaturated and polyunsat-

urated fats that are found in nuts, seeds, olive oil, eggs, salmon and avocados and are important to maintain a healthy heart. Bad fats are saturated fats found in margarine or butter and animal products. Evil fats are the trans fat found in lard, shortening and many baked goods such as cookies and muffins. These are the ones we need to stay far away from! With trans fats making major headlines, most fast food restaurants and food distributors have started promoting trans fat-free products. Though fats do have more calories per gram (9kcal/g) than protein (4kcal/g) or carbohydrates (4kcal/g), when they are consumed in moderation they can help promote good health.

## Myth #2 – Brown sugar is better than white sugar.

First of all, what really is brown sugar? It is simply white sugar with added molasses. Sure it does have some nutritional value, but not enough to make a significant difference to your health and well being. So, there

## Fact or Fiction?



is no added benefit of consuming brown sugar over white sugar. The optimal choice would be to consume sugar in moderation. Again, balance is vital to a healthy and happy lifestyle.

## Myth #3 – Go for the brown eggs and nix the white eggs.

Again, the brown versus white controversy. The truth is that colour has no affect on the nutrition, taste, quality or flavour of the egg. Brown eggs are brown because of the breed of the hen. If you buy brown eggs because you think they are healthier, do not be mistaken! The colour is the only difference between the two. Healthier options for eggs include: omega 3 enhanced eggs, organic eggs, free range eggs, cage free eggs, egg substitutes and egg whites. They are all low in fat and calories and make a wonderful, healthy breakfast!

## Myth #4 –Carbs are evil!

First and foremost, carbohydrates ("carbs") are the primary source of energy and an integral part of our diet. Carbohydrates on

average should make up 55% of your daily calories, while protein should make up 15% and fats 30%. Carbs themselves are not the problem — it's the portion and type of carbs we consume. We don't just eat a serving of rice or pasta. We eat a supersized, yummy bowl or plate of it! So, what's a proper serving of carbs? It's the size of a closed fist or about a 1-cup portion of rice, pasta, veggies or fruit. On average, rice or pasta should account for about 200 calories, fruit for 75 calories and veggies for about 40 calories. This is shocking news for most of us since we generally consume a lot more than just one serving.

The second truth is the type of carbs we choose. When we hit the supermarket, most of us — especially those with hectic schedules — stroll into the pasta and rice aisle and pick up a package of regular Catelli linguini and Mr. Ben's minute rice. Sound familiar? Well, it's the refined, white, processed and simple carbs that are the enemy! The idea here is to consume complex carbs, those that enter your

bloodstream slowly versus simple carbs that enter your bloodstream quickly and are easily absorbed. These carbs will keep you feeling full much longer! Complex carbs include whole grains such as whole wheat breads, cereals and pasta, brown rice, quinoa and couscous, just to name a few. So, the moral of the story is to keep the simple carbs such as jams, honey, candy, pop, sugary fruit juices and processed foods to a minimum and load up on those healthy whole wheat grains, fruits and veggies!

## Myth #5 – Stay away from nuts — they make you gain weight!

There is a little bit of truth to this. Nuts are very high in calories. For example, a cup of almonds has 546 calories! However, they are the best plant sources of protein and the "healthy fats". They are also rich in fibre, antioxidants and phytonutrients. Eating a small portion, about an ounce of nuts per day (23 almonds which have 160 calories) can help fight against heart disease and lower blood cholesterol. There are many ways to include nuts into your diet. Add sliced almonds to your oatmeal have a few cashews for a mid afternoon snack or enjoy a peanut butter and jam sandwich for lunch.

## Myth #6 –Skipping meals and eating less helps to keep the pounds off!

It is frightening to hear how many people still believe that skipping meals could actually help you lose weight! Skipping meals has only detrimental effects. When you skip a meal or consume fewer than 1200 calories, your body goes into starvation mode and slows down your metabolism to compensate. When you skip a meal you tend to overeat at the next meal (usually dinner) and ultimately consume more calories in one sitting than you would throughout the day!

The best way to reach or maintain a healthy body weight is to eat 5-6 small, balanced meals every 2-3 hours throughout the day. This will help stabilize your metabolism and keep your blood sugar levels balanced.

## Myth #7 – Coffee is a big "no no."

Your morning java is not as bad as you think. Studies have shown that coffee drinkers are less likely to have Type 2 Diabetes, Parkinson's disease and dementia. People who drink coffee also report fewer cases of



strokes, certain cancers and heart rhythm problems. However, this doesn't give you the green light to drown yourself in your favourite joe. Again, moderation is key. Enjoying two to three cups (that's 250 ml, not your Venti Starbucks cups!) a day is considered a safe and healthy amount. Since coffee causes dehydration, make sure to stay hydrated by coupling your coffee intake with 8 to 10 cups of water.

## Myth #8 – "Fat free" products are a healthier option.

Not necessarily. Many fat free products are high in calories or sugar which can be misleading. Most people feel "guilt free" when they see "fat free" on a label, but the problem is that they end up doubling up on the portion, which in turn adds more calories and fat! In this case, the healthier option would be to consume foods with a slightly higher fat content but enjoy a smaller serving. For example, one tablespoon of full fat sour cream compared to ¼ cup of fat free sour cream.

## Myth #9 - You shouldn't eat after 7pm.

Oprah Winfrey started this fad about not eating after 7pm and claimed it helped her shed the pounds. Well, we saw how that worked out for her! Your body doesn't shut down and stop metabolizing food after the magical time of 7pm. Most of us overindulge at night, consuming more calories for dinner than we would during the day, which causes us to gain weight. It's not necessarily when we eat, it's the type of food and the number of calories we consume. Again, it's a simple formula: calories in versus calories out. If you consume less calories and burn more, you'll lose weight. If you consume more calories and burn less, you'll gain weight. The idea is to consume the bulk of your calories during the day, when your metabolism is high, and keep the calories to a minimum at night, when your metabolism slows down.

The moral of the story is balance and moderation. There is no magical solution or quick fix to obtain a healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle includes a balance between proper nutrition and physical activity. So, eat well and stay active!

**By Ayktah Grover**

Founder, Aura Wellness

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# Boot Drive 2010 by Firefighters

On October 23, the Pickering Professional Firefighters Association held their annual Boot Drive, in support of the Image is Everything Campaign to bring the first MRI to Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering hospital.

Our amazing volunteers and firefighters had a great time fundraising for their local hospital while greeting area residents on the brisk, but sunny Fall day.

A special thank you to the area residents for their generosity of spare change and loose bills.

Photos from the Boot Drive can be seen here.

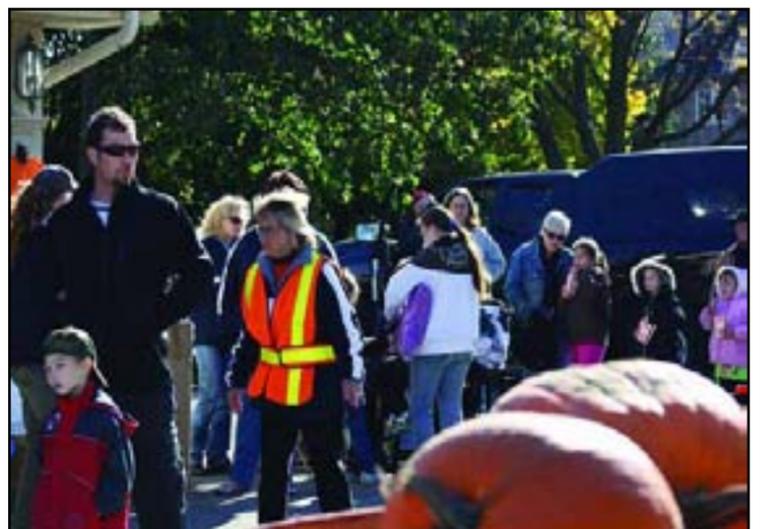


## 3rd Annual Bryson Insurance pumpkin giveaway

On October 16, Bryson Insurance held their third annual pumpkin giveaway in support of the Image is Everything Campaign to bring the first MRI to Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering hospital.

The spooky setting and Hallowe'en delights welcomed guests as they entered the pumpkin-strewn grounds of Bryson Insurance. Free pumpkins, popcorn, drinks and coffee were provided.

Thank you to Bryson Insurance and all who came out to enjoy the day and support their local hospital. Seen here are some pictures taken at the event.



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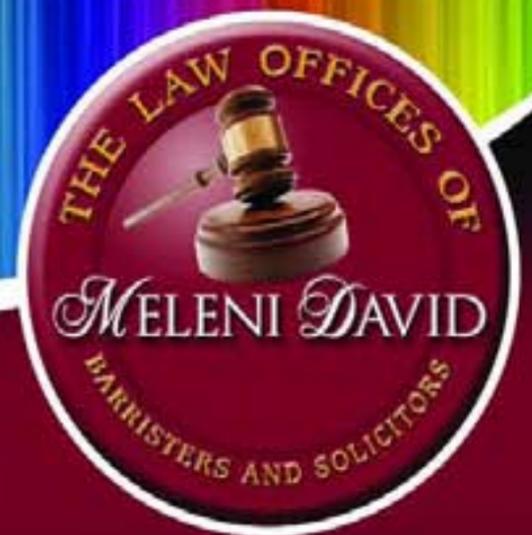
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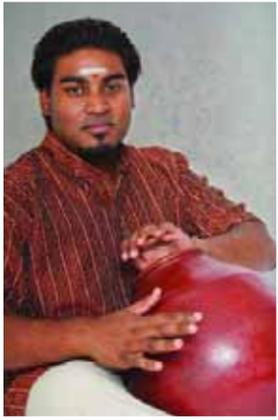
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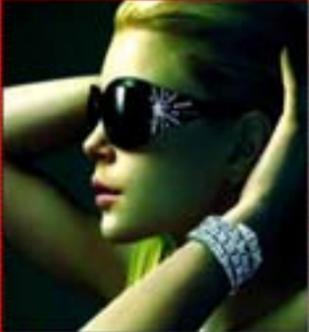



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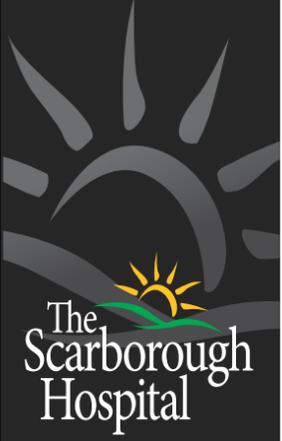
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Members of the community are invited to join senior management, the Board of Directors and the Community Advisory Council for an update on the latest developments at The Scarborough Hospital.

- Hear about the progress on our Clinical Action Planning process, and how the wants and needs of patients are shaping our decision-making;
- Learn how TSH's bylaws ensure good oversight for the taxpayers of Ontario;
- Hear about our plans for developing an integrated cancer care centre at the hospital.



# The Scarborough Hospital host Community Art Show

The Day Clinic is a Community Mental health program provided for those suffering from Mental illness who are not critically ill and need in-patient hospitalization. The Clinic includes an Art therapy program with two components - Art therapy and Open Art Studio.

The Art therapy program is a therapy based program that utilizes art as a communication tool

in order to target relevant issues and treatment goals. It is additionally a useful therapeutic tool particularly for those who are reluctant or unable to express themselves verbally.

Art on its own is therapeutic and therefore another component was incorporated - the Open Art Studio. This group teaches techniques to boost self esteem and

confidence in client's abilities. The Art show serves this purpose further as clients discover a skill/talent and recognize their artwork is valuable to others. The clients, who are willing, donate their artwork to the clinic and the proceeds received from the sale of these paintings serve to fund the program.

This program is beneficial for

the hospital as it bridges the gap between in-patient care and participation in the community - clients who are not yet ready/well enough to participate fully in the community gain ongoing support on their journey to wellness.

Participating in the joint art show promotes the program to both the hospital community and the Scarborough community at



large. Art facilitates healing - whether the creation of it or the appreciation of it.



Anne Marie Males, Vice President, Patient Experience, Alysia Neal, Sarah LaneBuck, Mental Health Therapist, Art Therapy Program, Carol-Ann Fox, Henry Borkowski, Director, Facility Development



# Cord Blood Banking

Families delivering babies at The Scarborough Hospital now have the opportunity to bank umbilical cord blood, providing a match for their child should they become ill and require a stem cell transplant later in life.

The Scarborough Hospital announced its new partnership with Inception Cord Blood Program at an event at the hospital on October 28. The partnership supports the hospital's vision of providing the best healthcare to a global community.

This new program is particularly important to Scarborough's

conditions such as Type 1 diabetes and cerebral palsy.

"The Scarborough Hospital delivers more than 5,200 babies each year. We are now providing our families with the education to make an informed decision about the value of cord blood," says Barbara Milana Scott, Patient Care Director of the Maternal Newborn and Child Care Program at The Scarborough Hospital. "Our hospital serves an ethnically diverse community. Two-thirds of the Scarborough population are visible minorities and we feel it is important that our expectant par-

ents know their options." The diversity of the community," explains Geryllyn Ochab, Vice President Sales and Marketing at Inception. "Children of mixed ethnicity are under-represented in international stem cell registries, meaning it is more difficult for those children in need to find a match."

For Christine Ross, banking her cord blood after the birth of her first child has had an incredible impact on the health of her now 14-year-old son Barrett. Against the advice of her obstetrician and a genetic counsellor - both of whom felt it was unnecessary for her to bank cord blood - Christine decided it was an investment worth making.

"We never thought we'd need it, but there was some comfort in knowing that we had it, just in case," says Christine, who spoke at the event at the hospital. "When Barrett was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes at the age of 9, I immediately started researching to see if the banked cord blood could be used in any way."

Christine found a research study and Barrett was accepted. He was re-infused with his stem cells, and the results were extraordinary.

"Today, almost five years later, Barrett is still in what is called the 'honeymoon stage' of the disease. He is still able to produce insulin. We were originally told by doctors that this stage would only last a few months, at most," says Christine. "Barrett is a normal child who loves sports and he is very active. He still requires insulin, but not to the same extent as would be expected had we not used the cord blood."

For more information about The Scarborough Hospital's cord blood banking program, visit [www.tsh.to/page/umbilical-cord-blood-banking](http://www.tsh.to/page/umbilical-cord-blood-banking), or call the hospital at 416-438-2911 ext. 3230.

# The Scarborough Hospital engages community to define "ideal patient experience"

Patients have confidence in the quality of care at The Scarborough Hospital believing the ideal patient experience includes involvement in their care plan and receiving respectful, courteous and friendly service.

These are some of the findings of an extensive community consultation process aimed at defining an "ideal patient experience" and assisting the hospital with its Clinical Action Planning Process, which is designed to create a stronger hospital for the residents of Scarborough.

To define the ideal patient experience, The Scarborough Hospital consulted with patients and those who had experience with the hospital, including friends and family members of patients. This was accomplished through a series of face-to-face meetings, a patient mapping study, focus groups and various online surveys. In total, 2,885 respondents provided input.

"This was an exciting process for us. The Scarborough Hospital's mission is to provide an outstanding care experience that meets the unique needs of each and every patient. We can't provide that without engaging our community in the process," says Anne Marie Males, Vice President, Patient Experience. "This truly was a unique experience that started with the patient and focused on the patient experience throughout."

"Historically, we've worked in silos when planning for the future. But this time we invited patients, members of the community and a variety of hospital employees and physicians to work together to determine the direction we should take in 11 specific areas," says Dr. Steven Jackson, Chief of Staff at The Scarborough Hospital. "We learned that what the doctor thinks is most important isn't always what the patient thinks is most important."



Dr. Tabo Sikaneta, a nephrologist at The Scarborough Hospital, cares for a patient

Those 11 areas - from children's health to cancer care to women's health - each had a planning team that was given relevant and typical patient scenarios including:

Scenario 1: Ramjeet is a healthy 4-year-old who developed a fever two days ago. His mother is concerned and is taking Ramjeet to the emergency department.

Scenario 2: Brian is 75, and does not speak English. He is diabetic and in danger of losing his right leg. He does not want to start hemodialysis.

Scenario 3: Dorinda is a 44-year-old single mom with a terrific 14-year-old daughter and a great job. The daughter of a breast cancer victim, Dorinda confronts her fears and gets a mammogram. Three weeks later, Dorinda receives a call; her results are abnormal.

By starting with these typical patient scenarios the planning process ensured that the patient's needs and wants were top priority. Each planning group has developed a series of recommendations that will be presented to stakeholders for feedback at a Consensus Summit on October 26. That feedback will help determine which of the recommendations will be implemented.

The report, Reflections on the Ideal Patient Experience, which includes key findings of the consultation process, is available at: [www.tsh.to/pages/Reflections-on-the-Ideal-Patient-Experience](http://www.tsh.to/pages/Reflections-on-the-Ideal-Patient-Experience).



Christine Ross (left) and her son Barrett shared their story at The Scarborough Hospital about how Christine's decision to bank umbilical cord blood has resulted in incredible improvements in managing Barrett's diabetes. After the event they chatted with Geryllyn Ochab of Inception (second from right) and Barbara Milana Scott of The Scarborough Hospital (right).

many ethnic communities, all of whom are severely under-represented in international and national stem cell registries. For instance, the South Asian representation is only 0.3 per cent in Canada's registry of potential stem cell donors compared to 82.7 per cent Caucasian.

Umbilical cord blood can be used for stem cell transplants. Today, stem cell transplants help treat more than 75 life-threatening diseases, including a wide range of cancers, genetic disease, immune system deficiencies and blood disorders. Stem cell transplants are also being used to treat

ents know their options."

The process is simple. The umbilical cord blood is collected by the delivering physician or midwife immediately following the birth of the baby. At The Scarborough Hospital, the cord blood can be transferred to Inception Cord Blood Program. Inception processes and stores the cord blood at a state-of-the-art laboratory. If needed, the sample is readily available for the exclusive use of the family.

"We are partnering with key institutions across the county. The Scarborough Hospital was identified as high on our list because of

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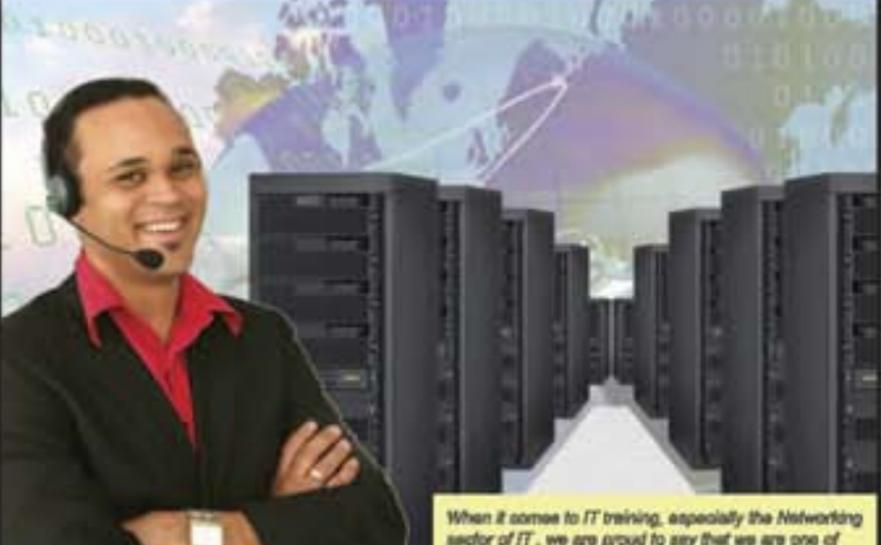
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I walk alone.  
I know this now.  
I thought so long  
That others walked with me.

The soul's journey  
Is a lonely one.  
None can walk  
With another.

Parents, husband, child  
All touch only  
The fringe of my  
Path, as I theirs.

But the path is lonely  
Each has to walk alone  
The only one who can  
Be with me is You, God.

So take my hand  
In Yours and walk  
With me, along  
My soul's journey.

Without Your touch,  
I will lose my way.  
My loneliness overwhelms  
and crushes me.

Without Your touch,  
I cannot feel even,  
The touch on the fringe  
Of my path, so help me.

Take my hand, Lord,  
Most of all when  
I quarrel with You;  
It is my cry for help.

-By Betty Paul Thottam.

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## GODS OWN CHILDREN FOUNDATION

### PRESS RELEASE

**Gods Own Children Foundation**, a grass roots non governmental organization working with disadvantaged and differently able children and youth in the north of Sri Lanka, has established a dedicated rehabilitation facility for differently able children affected by the war, in Achchuveli, in the Jaffna peninsula.

The residential facility for differently able children in Achchuveli will be inaugurated on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010, at 10 am.

Hon. Tissa Karaliyadde, Minister of Child Care and Development, and Hon. Milroy Fernando, Minister of Resettlement will be Chief Guests on this occasion.

This project by **Gods Own Children Foundation**, to assist differently able children, has the blessings of the highest levels of government - the presidential secretariat. **Gods Own Children Foundation** has been approved to care for and provide educational support to 350 children, in this current project. Accordingly 50 differently able children will be rehabilitated in the facility at Achchuveli. a further 100 differently able children are to be rehabilitated in other locations over the next 3 months. 150 orphans also are to be provided a new life under the direct care of GOCF.

**Gods Own Children Foundation** has already established a children's facility in Ubhayakathirgamam, Puloly South, Puloly. This children's facility consisting of both a boy's residence and a residence for girls is unique in the fact that, several houses have been incorporated in one single compound after removing the fences, thus providing adequate space resembling a mini village. Currently 125 children are accommodated in this children's village - named as **Puloly Children's Village**, and the numbers are expected to increase to 200, thus reaching the maximum capacity for this children's village.

In addition to the above described children's facilities, **Gods Own Children Foundation** also operates free Special Needs Schools in 6 locations, and free special employment skills training centers for disadvantaged youth in 7 locations.

**Gods Own Children Foundation**  
Registered Office: 140 Temple Road, Nallur, Jaffna.  
Telephone: 077 3627055  
Email: [godsownchildren.srilanka@gmail.com](mailto:godsownchildren.srilanka@gmail.com)  
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by Rev.Fr.Lasantha  
de Abrew s.j.

Although I am no more involved in the North- South Dialogue Desk of the Jesuit Ministry, I keep my awareness alert to the suffering and pain of our own in the North in various ways to kindle the fire of my Priestly Life. Recently I had an opportunity to join the junior religious sisters of the Sister Formation Program, their Dean, Rev. Sr. Rubika A.C. and Sr. Cynthia P.H. one of the senior lecturers on their exposure program to the Northern Sri Lanka.

We had an opportunity to visit Sannar in the District Mannar where the people are living in temporary huts donated by the UNHCR. They were told that they would be resettled in their own land but it had been a wild dream as they are relocated in a jungle as their own land has been named a High Security Zone under the Sri Lankan Army. The sisters had a wonderful opportunity to visit the so called re-settled ones in Red Barna village in Vishwamadhu and Kallaru which had the disaster of Tsunami in 2004.

In Vishwamadhu, Red Barna village there were sixty five families and most of them are up country Tamils who sought peaceful living in these areas after the Post Election 1977 and 1983 ethnic riots engineered by the Politicians. The Vishwamadhu people are living in very horrible conditions. Some of the people got agitated when we were visiting them and when they told us of their helplessness. The kallaru people did not lose their houses which were built after the Tsunami, during the fierce war.

At the last phase of our journey to the North, we visited the Holy Family Sisters and the war victim orphans at Uruthirapuram and in Mankulam orphanage of the girls organized by the Good Shepherd Sisters. On the last day of our exposure, the young religious spent some time in silence

# Young religious visit their own suffering brothers and sisters in Northern Sri Lanka



People expressing their grievances to the UK High Commissioner Mark Gooding, during his visit to IDP camps in Menik Farm in June 2010 – Pic by: UK High Commission, Sri Lanka

at the Madhu Shrine reflecting on what they have heard, seen and felt. They begged the grace of God's divine light to know what God is asking from them personally and collectively as young radical disciples of Jesus.

In all these places, the sisters had an ample opportunity to speak to the suffering persons, the war victims especially the women and children. They were enlightened by the priests and religious who were accompanying the suffering people in many quiet, unknown and in silent ways.

Some aspects which we need to pay attention had been highlighted.

- High military presence and the inherent insecurity among the people

The high military presence in these areas makes the resettled persons more tensed, uncomfortable and uneasy. The regular visits of the soldiers to their half built houses and temporary sheds, frequent arrests of the young males on various justified and unjustified charges, and inviting the children to the camps to watch films make them uneasy. With scars of war within they feel insecure. Their main query is that if something happens to whom are they to report. They need to make their living to restore what had

been lost and destroyed.

- Development of roads and government offices could be seen but the resettlement of IDPs by rebuilding their destroyed houses is false and not the truth

There are visible signs of building roads, especially on the Mannar- Puneryn Road government buildings are coming up. Most of the IDPs who returned are living in huts some on their own land but others in jungles as their land had not been reallocated. The people are building with their own savings, on their gold, on the donations sent by relations in Diaspora or helped by the Church organizations through their parish structures. They were not compensated for all they lost and had been destroyed.

The Government is very slow in granting permission to the NGOs and the INGOs on rebuilding, resettling and rehabilitation programs. It is heartwarming to see how these people are building their houses with hard toil as families. The parents and children are working till late evening to lay the foundations, building the walls etc with hard work. Some told us "We do not want the government to build houses for us but let them give us the compensation. We will build with the sweat of our brow."

- Caring for the war victims

There are many war widows, most of them young ones and orphans. As the bread winners are no more, these war widows need to be channeled for self employment. Unemployment has led them to destitution and some to immoral manipulations and prostitution. Most of the war widows are eager for self-employment in rearing animals, sewing, making household food items, and whatever possible according to their talents. But with all these crying desires, there are no government sponsored self income generating ventures but the government bared the volunteer NGOs helping in such opportunities.

The war victim children are the most affected. The credit goes to the various Catholic women religious congregations sacrificing their resources and personnel to care for a few of these victims especially the orphans who have lost both the parents in their children's homes. The facilities in these homes are commendable. We heard in some schools there are counseling sessions, in formal and informal ways.

There is a crying need to attend to the traumatic experiences of these young children in a systematic and progressive way. Some teachers of the area noted, "They have lost interest in studies because of lack of concentration. The IDP camp life style, war experiences, physical and mental wounds, back into unstructured housing atmosphere and the easy availability of DVD shops, liquor, smoking even promoted by the soldiers could be the causes for such lack of interest. If so, what will happen to the Tamil Culture in the Wannii?..." The need for structures to promote studying after school hours, means to promote and protect the Tamil identity and the trauma counseling felt

very acutely.

- Need for a political solution in the context of growing Symbolic violence

I shall innumerate this point through an incident of our exposure. As we were traveling by the A9 road, the soldiers would stop the bus and get into the bus without any consideration to the passengers. There were many Tamil passengers in the bus. All of them were carrying weapons. I could see the faces of the passengers. They were not happy and especially the Tamil persons were uneasy and uncomfortable.

This is unknowingly or knowingly exercising one's symbolic power over the other, "The role and the uniform of the soldier" to intrude into the personal-private space of the other without consent. This is symbolic violence which is more subtle but very strong on the discriminated or the oppressed one. These are Sinhalese soldiers who enjoy their war victory as the underlying base and the others are the Tamils who had been crushed by the Sinhalese especially architected by the Sinhalese soldiers.

The symbolic violence affirms the unequal treatment to the other although they live together. The newly decorated bo-trees and Buddhist temples along the A9 road and other resettlement areas in and around the army camps, War victory monuments, government sponsored institutions of security forces coming up speedy and the other side of the road, their own destroyed school buildings and children are studying under trees and high military presence are some the catalysts of symbolic violence. Therefore the timely need of our nation is that we have a political solution to the inherent causes led for a brutal war on justice and affirmation of human dignity to all as earliest as possible.



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# Bill C 49: "Government capitalizes on misunderstandings" - Mark Holland MP (Ajax - Pickering)

Mark Holland MP (Ajax - Pickering), Liberal Party's Public Safety and National Security Critic, lead Opposition debate in the House of Commons, Ottawa on Oct 27th, 2010 regarding the Canadian Government Bill C-49, a response to the recent refugee ships that have landed in British Columbia.



Mark Holland MP

The following is excerpts from the official Hansard of the text of speech delivered by Mark Holland MP, on the bill "Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act":

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise to speak to this bill

I am deeply concerned that any time the Conservatives are faced with a choice of considering policy, sitting down and having a rational discussion, or playing politics, they choose to play politics. There does not seem to be a headline the Conservatives are not willing to exploit.

I can remember the pardon issue, four or five years ago, when the then public safety minister said, after a sensational case, that they had fixed the pardon problem. He said they did not involve the rest of Parliament, because it was something they were able to do on their own. They refused to have any hearings. On the back of a napkin, they whipped something up and called it fixed.

And then we had Graham James. All of sudden, they feigned indignation and said they had to do something fast, forgetting that they themselves claimed to have fixed the problem some four years before.

However, this did not stop them from trying to play games with the problem again. They ratchet up the rhetoric and, on the back of a napkin, whip up a policy, instead of sitting down with Parliament and having a mature debate.

When the Sun Sea and the Ocean Lady arrived on Canadian shores, the Minister of Public Safety was eager to say this was a boatload of terrorists. He talked about intercepting boats in international waters, even though this would violate international conventions. Anywhere else this has been tried, it has been a disaster, raising fears that people would be thrown overboard to hide the evidence, that human beings would be tossed like luggage off the side



MV Sun Sea

of the ship to hide the fact that they were being smuggled.

So, for roughly 2% of the claimants Canada would get in a year, the Conservative government went nuclear, not because it wanted to fix something, but because it wanted to play politics and saw a great opportunity to drive a wedge.

The people the Conservatives called terrorists turned out to be mostly women and children. But that is an aside. Apparently, it did not matter much to them.

So after much floundering, including talk about going out into international waters, after throwing around a lot of rhetoric, we get this bill.

I have a lot of problems with the bill. Let me start with the fact that it is tough in all the wrong ways. It is extremely tough on claimants. It is easy on the scum

that preys upon the weak and smuggles others into this country. Because of this misplaced focus, I have serious doubts about how it could be effective.

In addition, we have to realize that the government is masking the fact that the real solution rests in engaging international partners. If there is one thing the government has not been able to do, it is work with other countries.

If we want to go after the people who prey on the weak, on those who are vulnerable, then we have to work with foreign jurisdictions and ensure that we go after this scum where they are operating. Instead of being hard on the women and children who are trying to escape war-torn regions, we have to go after the people who are preying on them, trying to suck money out of them, taking advantage of their unfortu-



nate situation, sticking them on dangerous ships and sending them across oceans to Canada. We have to stop the problem long before they walk onto that boat and begin their journey across the seas.

In this regard, and in many others, this is a placebo policy. And I wish it was only that. However, the government also plays on the public's misunderstanding of the distinction between the words "refugee", "immigrant", and "claimant", trying to mix them all up together, trying to confuse people, trying to make them think that there is some queue and that these claimants are jumping ahead of other people. The government knows this is false. That is what makes the assertions absolutely irresponsible and reprehensible.

The government's job is to inform public debate, to inform it with facts. The government is supposed to encourage honest discussion about the differences between political parties. Instead, the government capitalizes on misunderstandings, plays tricks with, let us be straight here, fake emails that go around with misinformation, and generally tries to engage in grand political games. I think this is shameful.

## Canada Government Bill Punishes Refugees

### - Canadian Council for Refugees

The Canadian Council for Refugees today expressed its grave concern that many of the measures in Bill C-49 fail to honour our obligations towards refugees and would result in refugees being treated unfairly. Despite the government's claims that it is targeting smugglers, the people who will suffer if this bill is passed are the people fleeing persecution, including children.

"Measures keeping some refugees longer in detention, denying them family reunification and restricting their freedom of movement are likely in violation of the Canadian Charter and of international human rights obligations," said Wanda Yamamoto, President. "People who are forced to flee for their lives need to be offered asylum and a warm welcome, not punished."

Among the measures that appear particularly unfair are the following:

Expanded powers to detain some refugee claimants for long periods. The CCR notes that children are among those affected by already existing powers of detention. Refugee children should not be detained.

Keeping some recognized refugees in long-term limbo, by denying them the right for five years to apply for permanent residence, and therefore for reunification with their children, in violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children left behind overseas are at risk while waiting to be reunited with their parents who are refugees in Canada.

Denial of freedom of movement for some refugees, in violation of the Refugee Convention. This provision would prevent, for example, a person from visiting family members who have taken refuge in third countries.

Denial of family reunification



Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés  
Canadian Council for Refugees

rights for some refugees. This provision would prevent, for example, a person from being able to sponsor a spouse they married after arrival in Canada.

These measures punish people who themselves are victims of persecution. The CCR calls on Parliament to respect international law which clearly states that refugees are not to be penalized for illegal entry (Refugee Convention, article 31).

The measures are also discriminatory, and potentially contrary to the Charter, in that they create two classes of refugees, with "designated" refugees denied basic rights.

The CCR rejects absolutely the government's labelling of refugee claimants as "queue jumpers". This characterization shows a total misunderstanding of the rights and realities of people fleeing persecution. International law recognizes that refugees cannot wait or follow immigration processes when they

are seeking asylum.

Parliament has recently approved a comprehensive reform of the refugee process, through Bill C-11. Only a few months later, the government is seeking to re-open the compromise that was reached with all political parties, through legislation that radically reduces the rights of persons who have come to Canada seeking our protection.

The CCR also notes that the proposed harsh penalties will not deter people who are fleeing for their life. What they will do is gratuitously punish people who have fled persecution.

With respect to the offence of smuggling, the CCR notes that the current provision is already so broadly drafted that it covers not only smugglers who are exploiting people for profit, but also individuals who are acting purely on humanitarian motives, in order to help refugees. In 2007, smuggling charges were laid against a refugee worker from the US, Janet Hinshaw-Thomas. Although the charges were subsequently dropped, the law needs to be amended to make sure that people acting purely for humanitarian motives are never again prosecuted.

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For the very first time in Canada, enthusiasts of Indian classical music will be treated to a truly unique experience of an all-night concert on 13th November. Held at the awe-inspiring St. Andrews Church, the event will bring together some of the most renowned names in Indian classical music like Samir Chatterjee, Shashank, Ramesh Misra, Swapan Chaudhuri, Dibyarka Chatterjee and Gauri Guha. Music lovers will enjoy the rare opportunity to experience this legendary and well-preserved art through the inimitable orchestration of percussion, strings, wind instruments and vocals.

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# CHHANDAYAN HOSTS ITS FIRST ALL-NIGHT INDIAN CLASSICAL CONCERT IN CANADA

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All night classical concerts are part of the Indian classical music tradition. For centuries, Indian pundits and ustads have enthralled their audiences with breath-taking renditions of the various ragas that are dedicated to different times of the day. Now, Chhandayan, a not-for-profit organization is bringing this centuries-old tradition to Toronto.

Chhandayan was started in Calcutta, India, in 1984, and in 1988, started operations in the U.S. Samir Chatterjee is the Founder-Director of CHHANDAYAN, an organization dedicated

to promoting and preserving Indian music and culture. Samir has been teaching for the last 35 years and many of his students are established performers. He has authored a comprehensive 654-page book entitled 'A Study of Tabla' and a guide book to Indian music titled 'Music of India'. He is on the faculty at Yale University, Manhattan School of Music, University of Pittsburgh, New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music and University of Bridgeport in CT.

This not-for-profit organization dedicated to serve all aspects

of Indian classical music from teaching to understanding and appreciation of a timeless tradition. Chhandayan offers classes for Indian music (vocal and instrumental) supplemented by periodic workshops, seminars and lecture-demonstrations throughout the year in Manhattan and Jackson Heights (Queens) in New York, Nutley, Edison and Kendall Park in New Jersey, Potomac in Maryland, Ashburn in Northern Virginia and Cheswick (in Pittsburgh area) in Pennsylvania.

Chhandayan's series of concerts are some of the most popular and exciting events to the local community where it serves. The highlight of these series is the annual all-night concert held in New York City on the second Saturday of May, every year, for the past 11 years.

For more details, please visit <http://www.chhandayan.com>.

For tickets for the Toronto concert, visit [www.allnightconcerts.org](http://www.allnightconcerts.org).

Tickets are available at \$100, \$70, \$50 and \$30.

Special discounts available for students and group bookings of 10 and more.

### A BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE ARTISTS

Samir Chatterjee is a virtuoso Tabla player of India. He travels widely across the world performing in numerous festivals as a soloist or with other outstanding musicians from both Indian and western musical traditions. Samir performed at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in Oslo, Norway on December 10th, 2007, and twice at the UN General Assembly. His compositions are widely acclaimed.

Samir Chatterjee is rated 'A' as an artiste of the national radio and television of India. In concert Samir has accompanied many of India's greatest musicians including Pt. Ravi Shankar, Ud. Vilayat Khan, Pt. Bhimsen Joshi, Pt. Jasraj and Pt. Nikhil Banerjee, among others.

Maestro Shashank stormed into the music world at the age of seven. He was the youngest musician to have been invited by

The Music Academy, Chennai to perform the senior most slot of The Music Academy, (often performed by Legends of Indian Classical Music), at the age of 12 - a record yet to be broken in the history of South Indian Music.

Pundit Ramesh Misra A true example of total dedication, depth and maturity, Pundit Ramesh Misra is a phenomenon in the field of Indian classical music. Mastering one of the most difficult and unique string instruments 'Sarengi', Ramesh Misra is acclaimed as an outstanding artist of India. Ramesh started his initial intensive training at a very tender age from his father Pt. Ramnath Misra and acquired further knowledge and training from some of the finest musicians of Beneras Gharana such as Pt. Hanuman Prasad Mishra and Pt. Gopal Mishra. Presently he is under the tutelage of the legendary maestro Pundit Ravi Shankar.

Pundit Swapan Chaudhuri is an eminent tabla player whose musical accomplishments have earned him wide renown. In 1981, Ali Akbar Khan invited him to come to the U.S. from Calcutta and teach at the College. Not only is he a top level musician and performer, but also an excellent teacher.

Dibyarka Chatterjee is a young and promising Tabla player from the Farrukhabad Gharana. His natural inclination towards Tabla became evident shortly after his birth, and at the age of five he was initiated by his illustrious father Pt. Samir Chatterjee. Since then he has been going through the rigorous discipline of lesson and practice.

Gauri Guha An acclaimed Indian classical vocalist for the last 35 years, Gauri Guha has eight albums to her credit.

A recipient of many grants from the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council, she has performed internationally at many prestigious concerts. Gauri has been profiled on TV, Radio and in various newspapers in North and South America, Europe and Asia.

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# The man who served under nine Prime Ministers of Ceylon/Sri Lanka

By D.B.S. Jeyaraj

Deshamanya Bradman Weerakoon turned 80 on Oct 20th, 2010. He really needs no introduction, having done Sri Lanka proud on many occasions in his many capacities and served the nation to the fullest of his ability in public service for half a century.

Bradman as he is generally known has served under nine Prime ministers of Ceylon/Sri Lanka namely Sir John Kotelawela, SWRD Bandaranaike, Dudley Senanayake, Sirima Bandaranaike, JR Jayewardena, Ranasingha Premadasa, DB Wijetunge and Ranil Wickremasinghe.

To strike a personal note I had the pleasure of interacting with Bradman Weerakoon when he was secretary to the Ministry of Plantations Industry in the UNP government that took office in 1977. I was then a reporter on the Tamil Daily "Virakesari" and was assigned to cover the ministry. MDH Jayewardena was the minister and Alick Aluvihare his deputy.

Since a large number of "Virakesari" readers were employed in the plantations and the paper itself had an up-country edition the day to day activities of the Plantations Industry ministry were of great relevance to the paper.

Covering the plantations industries ministry therefore was an important part of my duties as a journalist. My task was made easy because of the friendly disposition and cooperative spirit of both Bradman Weerakoon and the addl secretary YG Punchihewa. I found both to be very courteous and amiable in their dealings with the press.

Bradman Weerakoon had in depth knowledge of the subjects under his purview and would explain the intricacies in a very simple manner so that journalists could write their stories with clarity.

Apart from being an efficient and capable official Bradman Weerakoon was what I would call a thorough gentleman.

I wish him well on his eightieth birthday and hope the rest of his golden twilight would be a productive period where he would pen many, many books. [dbsjeyaraj.com]

Bradman Weerakoon, the remarkable, multi-faceted personality, concluded a recent interview with Marianne David of the Financial Times, Sri Lanka as follows:

Question: How will you celebrate your 80th birthday, which falls on October 20th, 2010?

Answer: I'm having 80 friends coming for dinner at the Galle Face Hotel, which is a special place for me. I was married there and we celebrated our 50th anniversary there. I have most of my little dos there. I like the spaciousness, ambience and old-fashioned nature of the place. Everybody is very kind to me there.

The birthday is not a celebration... I find that after my wife passed away, it doesn't feel like a big celebration. I don't think I can celebrate in that sense, jumping up for joy, when you have lost your partner for so long who has been so loyal and affectionate... I feel a sense of great sadness.

The occasion is a sober thank you. I want to thank everybody who comes for all the generous support throughout the years. I couldn't have achieved what I have without the support of friends, relations, associates, lovely colleagues... all supportive, helpful and very loyal over many years. I have people from Ampara who still want to give me things. I want to thank everybody for that.

I don't think I've yet reached that final stage that Shakespeare talked about in The Seven Ages of Man – the second childishness and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything. I think I'm not there yet – don't know how many more. You never know these things.

But then, what do I do with the rest of it? I'm very happy where I am. It's a rich period of one's life when you don't have too many problems to worry about. You have a certain loneliness but you also have a certain freedom as a result of that loneliness, doing what you want.

I thought maybe I should write – you can't do much, but you can write and speak – about the future that real-



Bradman Weerakoon

ly is the ideal of my future. This future ideal comes from two things that I've kept very close to my heart.

One was what Bandaranaike said in 1948, about what the new nation needs – freedom from disease, freedom from ignorance, freedom from want and freedom from fear. I think those four freedoms – I've echoed them over and over again – are a wonderful ideal to work towards for everybody, not for some. Some can always have that.

The other thought is that wonderful thought of Rabindranath Tagore:

*Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;*

*Where knowledge is free;*

*Where the world has not been broken up*

*into fragments by narrow domestic walls;*

*Where words come out from the depth of truth;*

*Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;*

*Where the clear stream of reason*

*has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;*

*Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action*

*Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.*

"I think that might be a suitable kind of objective for the remaining years", said Bradman Weerakoon.



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The introduction of the Harmonized Sales Tax in both Ontario and British Columbia on July 1st 2010 has been widely cited by real estate professionals and analysts as one of the major factors affecting a slowdown in housing sales.

This theory seems to be supported by a recent survey commissioned by the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) and conducted by Ipsos Reid, which shows that 56% of people in Ontario believe that the new HST applies to the cost of resale homes.

With the average resale home price sitting at \$333,000 in Ontario, this means that many would expect to pay an additional \$40,000 in sales tax if they

# Majority (56%) of Ontarians Believe Harmonized Sales Tax Applies to Resale Home



bought a home at that value. The reality is that there is no HST collected on the full purchase price of a resale home. In fact the HST

is only levied on the various transaction fees associated with the purchase of a home that has been previously occupied (i.e. not a

newly-built home).

"Clearly, Ontarians still don't know what the HST covers and what is exempt," said OREA president Dorothy Mason. "This is not helping the housing market, and it's not helping the Ontario economy. This confusion means that many buyers think the cost of a resale home is tens of thousands of dollars higher than it actually is."

She added: "We're doing our part to inform our clients, but we shouldn't have to do it alone. We're calling on the Ontario government to launch an immediate public awareness campaign to educate taxpayers and end the

HST confusion. For average homebuyers, learning that the HST does not apply to the full purchase price means a \$40,000 saving they weren't expecting."

Although there have been signs of improvements in the Canadian housing market recently, with the Canadian Real Estate Association reporting sales gains in both September and August, Real estate agents in Ontario are concerned that their business is being damaged by the fear their business is being hurt largely by the mistaken belief that the HST applies to previously owned homes.

## Will We See The End of Land Transfer Tax in Toronto?

Toronto builders and realtors are waiting to see if Rob Ford keeps one of his key campaign promises when he's sworn in as mayor – to repeal the Land Transfer Tax within the first year.

But exactly how long it will take remains a hot topic.

Ford told the Toronto Real Estate Board's annual general meeting earlier in October, the decision may have to wait until after next year's provincial election.

"You have to work with the provincial government to elimi-



nate the land transfer tax and the provincial government will be shut down starting probably in April or May," he told CityNews after the meeting. "So anything that has to be filtered through the provincial government might be delayed."

TREB spokesperson Von Palmer said after the City Election, Toronto doesn't neces-

sarily have to filter it through the provincial government. It can impose the tax – and remove it – without any provincial amendments under the City of Toronto Act. But he confirmed Ford could be planning to ask the province to amend the actual act itself, thereby preventing a future mayor from ever re-introducing the Land Transfer Tax.

Ford could also make the decision to repeal the tax retroactive. "This could be a helpful move especially if there is repeal of the tax to minimize any impact on the market," Palmer explained, in an email to PropertyWire.ca.

Political observers say Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty may also be more motivated to help remove the tax after this week's

municipal elections. Voters seemed to endorse change in Ford's overwhelming victory, and Liberals fear that could spill over into next year's provincial election.

The longer the decision takes, the more money adds up in city bank accounts. Officials confirmed the Land Transfer Tax brought in \$183 million for Toronto in 2009.

The tax adds about \$3,725 to the cost of a \$400,000 home in Toronto.

What are your feelings about Rob Ford setting his sights on the land transfer tax - was it an empty election promise or will this change be coming before you know it?

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# The Festival of Lights

In 2010, Diwali will be celebrated on 5th November.

Diwali is celebrated by Hindus in India and all around the world in October or November. It is the Hindu New Year and is either a 3-day or 5-day holiday depending on where you come from.

It is a very exciting and colourful holiday. Homes are cleaned to welcome the New Year and windows are opened so that the Hindu goddess of wealth, Lakshmi, can enter. It is believed that she cannot enter a house which is not lit up, so every

household burns special Diwali clay lamps (diyas) to light the way for the goddess, which is why the holiday is also known as the Festival of Lights.

Children have a holiday from school. Presents are given and delicious holiday food is prepared and exchanged. New clothes and jewellery are worn. Parties are held, and dice and card games are played. Fireworks and fire-crackers are set off to warn off evil spirits, so it is a noisy holiday too!





**Deepak Obhrai, MP**  
Calgary East

## Media Advisory

October 29, 2010

**10<sup>th</sup> National Diwali Celebration on Parliament Hill**

Ottawa – Deepak Obhrai, M.P. for Calgary East and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is pleased to announce the 10<sup>th</sup> National Diwali Celebration on Parliament Hill.

**When** : Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>  
**Where** : Government Conference Centre, Main Hall, 2 Rideau Street, Ottawa  
**Time** : 6:30 p.m.

There will be a brief program that includes Diwali Pooja (prayers), speeches from participating dignitaries including political leaders and concluding with a reception with traditional Diwali sweets. Members from all political parties, diplomats and more than 500 Indo-Canadians from Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal will be in attendance.

Diwali, popularly known as the Festival of Lights, has today become a widely celebrated Festival in Canada and is celebrated by Indo-Canadians and South Asian Canadians across the country.

Members of the media are cordially invited to attend.

-30-

For more information, please contact:  
Mohan Samarasinghe, Office of Deepak Obhrai MP at (613) 947-4567  
or on email at [ObhraiD@parl.gc.ca](mailto:ObhraiD@parl.gc.ca)

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PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

November 5, 2010

Diwali Greetings from the Prime Minister

*As millions of people around the world celebrate the Festival of Lights, it is with great pleasure that I extend my warmest greetings to all Canadians observing Diwali.*

*This luminous festival commemorates significant events in the history of Hinduism, Sikhism and Jainism. The time-honoured Diwali tradition of the lighting of the diya is a powerful symbol of the triumph of good over evil and knowledge over ignorance. At its essence, Diwali conveys a universal message of hope, peace and renewal that transcends borders and faiths.*

*Canada has inherited a wealth of cultural traditions. Diwali celebrations across the country honour the heritage and contributions of our large and dynamic South Asian communities. I have had the pleasure to participate in the annual Diwali event that has illuminated Parliament Hill for more than a decade. Celebrations of the Festival of Lights are reflective of our South Asian communities' significant role in shaping a vibrant, pluralistic Canada for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*On behalf of my colleagues in the Government of Canada, please accept my best wishes for a joyous celebration.*

Happy Diwali. Namaste. Sat Sri Akal.




*The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.*  
Prime Minister of Canada

## Diwali Statement by the Honourable Jim Karygiannis, M.P., Scarborough-Agincourt

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to those of the Hindu, Sikh and Jain faiths as you celebrate Diwali – the Festival of Lights.

Diwali is a time when the faithful light diyas – small clay pots filled with oil to signify victory of good over the evil within an individual. The festival is a joyous occasion marked with fireworks and light displays; presentation of flowers; sharing of sweets; wearing of new clothes; and, worship. While the story behind Diwali varies, its essence is the same - to rejoice in the inner light, the underlying reality of all things.

As a Member of Parliament, for many years I have worked closely with the Canadian Diasporas of many countries where Diwali is observed on issues important to these communities. I have been privileged to visit many of these countries and know that Diwali is an important festival in the religious life of millions of people throughout the world.



## LETTERS & OPINIONS

October 24 has come and gone. Like every year it is a day which gives us much food for thought. For the sake of record it is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter on October 24, 1945.

One and all will hail the preamble to the UN Charter which seeks: "(a) to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind; (b) to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small; (c) to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of

# A Day to Remember- United Nations



international law can be maintained; and (d) to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

Whether or not the UN has been able to live up to it has been often a matter of debate. There are many who feel that as long as some members of the global body are more equal (possessing veto power) than the others it would not be able to function effectively. It can't be denied, however, that its presence in midst is a big boon. Very rightly UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has observed on this October 24: "UN Day is a day on which we resolve

to do more. More to protect those caught up in armed conflict, to fight climate change and avert nuclear catastrophe; more to expand opportunities for women and girls, and to combat injustice and impunity; more to meet the Millennium Development Goals." He has left little doubt that it is a continuous struggle to match conflicting interests.

This year's UN Day has focused on the eight Millennium Development Goals. To that end it follows on the high-level plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly held from September 20 to 22 which adopted a global action plan to achieve the eight goals by their target date of 2015. The summit had announced major new commitments for women's and children's health and other initiatives against poverty, hunger and disease. The eight goals are to: "(1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; (2)



**Kanayalal Raina**

achieve universal primary education; (3) promote gender equality and empower women; (4) reduce mortality rate; (5) improve maternal health; (6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) ensure environmental sustainability; and (8) develop a global partnership for development."

Who will underestimate the significance of any of these objectives? Some headway has been

made in the direction of achieving them. There has been a big leap towards cutting the rate of extreme poverty, getting children into primary schools, addressing AIDS, malaria and child health, and a good chance to reach the target for access to clean drinking water. But a lot more is required to be done. It is admitted that "improvements in the lives of the poor have been unacceptably slow, and some hard-won gains are being eroded by the climate, food and economic crises." We in this State often talk about the UN for our own reason. If we pause for a while we will realise that the world forum stands for a lot more and not just politics.

### Kanayalal Raina

*Kanayalal Raina is a Brampton-based engineer by training, project consultant by profession and freelance writer by passion.*

# Commonwealth is losing its reputation as a standard-bearer for human rights

by **Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah**

The allegations in October 9th, 2010 edition of the London-based Guardian newspaper that the Commonwealth secretariat has abandoned its commitment to defend human rights could not have come at a worse time. [Titled "Commonwealth has abandoned human rights commitment - leaked memo" it says: "Leaked document obtained by the Guardian shows staff told by secretary general it is not their job to speak out against abuses."] Bad press around the Delhi games had already led to questions about what the Commonwealth is for these days, and this news potentially undermines the very thing that sets the association apart.

If the Commonwealth is to survive in the 21st century, it needs to show that it stands for something more than its ties to the old empire. The obvious choice, reaffirmed most recently when leaders met late last year, is a commitment to "fundamental values and principles" around human rights and democracy.

Putting these lofty ideals into practice may be difficult given the diversity of the association — which covers Australia to Zambia — but if its leadership is not seen as a credible custodian of these values then the rest of the

Commonwealth project will suffer.

Unlike most other multilateral groupings, the Commonwealth is rooted in a long history and buttressed by unrivalled civil society and business networks. There is no Royal OECD Society or G20 Parliamentary Association. This gives the Commonwealth a huge advantage.

But it also means that its institutions have a harder time carving out a role for themselves. With a total budget less than one per cent of the Department for International Development's, and fewer staff than Cornwall council's fire and rescue service, the secretariat is unlikely to find too many areas in which it will be uniquely placed to add real value. It could be a convenor, bringing together diverse experiences and expertise from around the world, but without an over-arching purpose it risks descending into a series of expensive talkshops.

The Commonwealth's role as a custodian and champion of values, therefore, is its unique selling point and the area where it has been strongest in previous decades.

No other body boasts a global membership of countries that have voluntarily signed up to such strong ideals. Nor does any other have a mechanism for self-regulation like the Commonwealth's ministerial action group, which

has the power to suspend, and ultimately expel, recalcitrant members.

The Commonwealth played a lead role in the global campaign to end apartheid in South Africa, with the secretary general often taking a view that was unpopular with member states, notably Britain. And it pioneered independent international election-observer missions, many of which criticised practices in member states.

But the organisation has been woefully quiet in these areas in recent times. The Gambian president has threatened journalists and human rights activists without any criticism from the secretariat and it took almost three years after the coup for Fiji to be finally suspended late last year. Though we are told that work is being done behind the scenes, public silence hurts the association's credibility.

Just as the world is crying out for a credible moral authority, the Commonwealth has become shy and retiring. The fact that the association is governed by consensus is a unique strength, giving all its members an equal stake and preventing the kind of politicised deadlock that so often cripples the U.N. security council. But in recent years the consensus ideal has become an obsession, locking the Commonwealth into



being as conservative as its most conservative member, many of which are reluctant to sanction criticism due to their own less-than-perfect records.

By contrast, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees campaigns tirelessly on international protection; and just last month the European commission warned France over its treatment of the Roma.

The problem for the Commonwealth is as much philosophical as political. The fear of being branded neo-imperialist seems to have made it reluctant to push too hard on human rights. Yet, given that its members have freely subscribed to these ideals, holding them to account on their promises is hardly imposing western liberalism.

If the Commonwealth is to recover from its recent battering, it must make good on its promise of being an association that holds to its values. This means lending a helping hand where appropriate

but also pointing a finger where there are serious shortcomings.

The founding fathers had visionary ideals. Nehru had hoped that the modern Commonwealth would bring "a touch of healing" to the world. Today, it's the Commonwealth that needs an urgent dose of courage and ambition.

*(Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah is director of the Royal Commonwealth Society.)*



**Dr. Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah**

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## LETTERS & OPINIONS

# The Instrument of Accession 1947 - The story of Kashmir

What does 26th October 1947 mean for us? I still have the memories of October 1947, although I was still a kid. I could see the aircrafts flying over Srinagar. I did not know why such aircrafts were hovering over the city then. I only knew then that Kabalies (tribal invasion - raiders) from Pakistan had invaded us and were killing all Hindus and Sikhs. I still remember the day when we left our home in 4 hired tongas (horse drawn carriage) with our some belongings and family members of over 26 persons in the mid of the night to save our lives from the invaders from Pakistan. I still remember how our houses were burnt down and looted no sooner we were few miles away from our village. I had no answers to what was going on then.

Being a Kashmir Pandit, many Indians and Pakistanis settled in Canada and Canadians ask me here questions frequently about what is going on in Kashmir. A prospect to find an answer to it, 63 years after, is indeed heart-rending. Is it a matter of joy for us or a sad legacy of the partition? Till today, we don't have an answer to it. For some it is a day to celebrate, while as for others it is an eminently forgettable day. Truth lies between the two somewhere.

Gulab Singh acquired title to Kashmir pursuant to the Treaty done with the British, at Amritsar, on 16th March 1846. He consolidated his reign and established the State of Jammu & Kashmir boundaries whereof extended to far North West in the Indian sub-continent. That is history. We, however, need to cull out the period of Rule by Maharaja Hari Singh, because that is germane to the present discussion. Hari Singh ascended the throne in 1925. The period coincided with the rise in political and economic aspirations of the Kashmiris, majority of whom were Muslims. Reading Room Party, of which late Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah was a leading light, was formed by a few educated Muslim boys to deliberate upon their future.

The explosion of 1931 turned that into a political party called the Muslim Conference. This was a time when modern politics was taking shape around the world. The Indian sub-continent was also experiencing it. The Muslim Conference articulated the demands of the Muslims i.e. jobs for the educated and re-opening of some of their closed religious places. With the passage of time a big political churning unfolded which attracted a good number of non-Muslims, from all the regions, to the anti-Ruler campaign. Sheikh Abdullah, too, reached out to them. Then a trend developed to open the doors of the

Party to every community.

That resulted in transformation of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference in 1938. Abdullah pioneered the move. His meeting with the leaders of Indian National Congress, a party spearheading the freedom struggle against the British, acted as the catalyst for the changeover. A new relationship, based on common agenda and values, developed between the leadership of the National Conference and the Indian National Congress. The relations got cemented in Sopore General Council meeting of the National Conference, in 1945, in which Jawaharlal Nehru, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan --Frontier Gandhi--Saifuddin Kichloo, Samad Khan of Balochistan and Dawood Gaznavi of Sind participated as guests. An alignment between the two parties came into existence. Seeds of Kashmir's association with India were, thus, sown. No wonder. Both the parties held many things in common. They believed in pluralism and democratic way of governance.

Along with the National Congress, Mr. Jinnah came up with his Muslim League on the Indian political firmament with vengeance. He propagated a political creed which went quite opposite to the one held dear by National Conference and the Congress. Jinnah propounded the 'two Nation Theory' and claimed a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims after the British left India. Sheikh and his National Conference were totally against it. They opposed Jinnah tooth and nail. It was not that Sheikh Abdullah made friends with the Congress at the first go. Even after he had converted the Muslim Conference into National conference (NC) some of his erstwhile comrades revived it and aligned with Jinnah and his Muslim League (M L). Sheikh was conscious of it. He wanted to strike at the roots.

David Devadas tells us in his well researched book, In Search of Future -The Story of Kashmir "..... Sheikh Abdullah told his biographer how he had first gone to Bombay in Feb 1944 to invite Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the League icon had said he was too busy to visit Kashmir but he could meet him again when Assembly session took place in Delhi. How Abdullah had taken Bakshi with him to Delhi in April the same year. How he had sent Bakshi to Banihal at the edge of the Valley to receive the brilliant Solicitor - after Gulam Abbas had received him warmly in Jammu .....Jinnah was not in Kashmir to bask in flattery .... He began to extol the Mirwaiz's piety and heceter the N.C to merge with the Muslim Conference ...." P - 43 Then he

describes how Sheikh Abdullah was dismayed and frustrated at the behaviour of Jinnah. Jinnah nursed a pathological hatred for the Sheikh. So their relation never took off. Nehru lent great support to the NC in its fight against the Maharaja.

We know Abdullah wanted a relationship with India. Here we relate a foreigner's account. Sandeep Bamzai in his book Bonfire of Kashmiriyat -Deconstructing the Accession records a report of Ihsan Abdel Koddous a member of the Egyptian press delegation which visited India after the independence thus, "Koddous, writing in Rosa El Youssef, said he asked Sheikh Abdullah why he had chosen to accede to India? While endeavouring that Kashmir might be made an Asian Switzerland, Sheikh during the conversation recognized the impossibility of that endeavour, that designs against his country were too strong to be resisted, and that as one is given by him to understand, it will ultimately have to join either Hindustan or Pakistan ..... This would leave one in doubt as to Sheikh Abdullah's preference that his country should join India and not commit suicide through accession to Pakistan.

Throughout the stage of his struggle against the British and Maharaja, the only support he received was from Congress Party, Gandhi and Nehru. The late M.A Jinnah, the creator of Pakistan, had on the contrary considered him as an extreme leader who is more deserving of imprisonment rather than support ...."

Then came 1947 along with joy and horror. The British, while preparing to leave India, announced on 3rd June, 1947 the plan to partition the country into two Dominions. As per the Memorandum issued by the Cabinet Mission on 26th May 1946 the rights surrendered by the Princely States to the Crown would revert back to them when two new Dominions are created. Princely states would not be transferred to the Indian Government until then. Mountbatten addressed the Chamber of Princes on July, 25, 1947 and advised them, although they had become independent, to accede to one of the Dominions, keeping certain considerations in mind. He told them that accession was to be under Cabinet Mission Memorandum of 16th May, which meant the surrender to the Central Government of only three subjects Defense, External Affairs and Communications. Accordingly, a draft Instrument of Accession was circulated.

A State could accede to either Dominion by executing an Instrument of Accession signed by the Ruler and accepted by the



Governor-General of the concerned Dominion. While as accession of 564 States to the Indian Dominion was a smooth affair, it encountered problems in regard to J & K, Hyderabad and Junagadh States. The difference in the religions of the Rulers and the subjects may have been the reason.

The Maharaja of Jammu And Kashmir proposed a Stand-Still agreement to the two Dominions. Pakistan agreed to it only to tear it apart soon after. India paid no heed to it. Maharaja Hari Singh was in dilemma whether he should accede to Pakistan or India. Most of his subjects were Muslims. His State was physically well connected with Pakistan. But for the Radcliffe award it lacked connectivity with India. The N.C and Sheikh Abdullah wanted association with India, while as Muslim Conference lead by Gulam Abas and Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah favoured relationship with Pakistan. Within Muslim Conference there was a section lead by Ch Hameedullah which preferred an independent State.

Maharaja too had the similar preference. His Prime Minister R.C. Kak shared this view. Jinnah tried to influence the Ruler through his next P.M Meherchand Mahajan to settle for Pakistan. Mountbatten, in Srinager, told Hari Singh to accede to either Dominion before 14th August. Failing in their effort to coerce the Maharaja to accede to Pakistan economic blockade of the State followed by the tribal invasion was resorted to. In consequence whereof the Maharaja approached G.O I for help. He was told that in absence of accession it would not be possible for them to render the military aid. Therefore he deputed Mahajan to Delhi with a letter offering accession to India. Allen Campbell-Johnson write in their book Mission With Mountbatten, 'Mountbatten said in the defense committee meeting on 25th Oct, which considered Maharaja's request, that in the absence of accession of the State to India military assistance could not be sent to the State. Moreover, accession should only be temporary prior to a plebiscite.' P 189. The Instrument of Accession was, then, signed by the Maharaja on 26th Oct 1947 and accepted by the Governor General of India. So the day became momentous for the nationalist

forces a day to commemorate. Constituent Assembly of the State ratified it. Sorrow, however followed. The Indian Army landed in Srinagar on 27th Oct and, at a great cost, repelled the tribal attack, which by then had the support of regular Pak Army. But Pakistan remained in illegal possession of some part of the State known as P.O.K.

Meanwhile India lodged a complaint with U N Security Council against Pakistan for withdrawing her forces from Kashmir. Thus an intervention of the World Body occasioned and international Arbiters like Owen Dixon, Gunnar Jarring and Frank Graham came on the scene. Plebiscite was mooted. Before that, however, Pakistan was required to vacate that part of Kashmir that it had occupied illegally. That did not happen so far.

From 1947 up to now three major wars broke out between India and Pakistan. Since 1990 we are facing the brunt of Pakistan sponsored militancy which consumed thousands of people and gave rise to a convoluted discourse, besides turning lacks of people homeless. Most tragic part of it is that the pro Pak Publicists like Alastair Lamb, Stanely Wolpert and Victoria Schofield have audacity to challenge the very existence of the Instrument of Accession and the eye witness accounts of dramatis personae like V.P Menon, Alan Campbell-Johnson and the then Prime Minister M C Mahajan. Let there be a dispassionate and sincere debate on the nature of issue. We may not be sure how things would turn out exactly for the people of the State but we can hope that; regardless of how they turn out, they would make some sense for the people to live here.



**Kanayalal Raina**

Kanayalal Raina is a Brampton-based engineer by training, project consultant by profession and freelance writer by passion.



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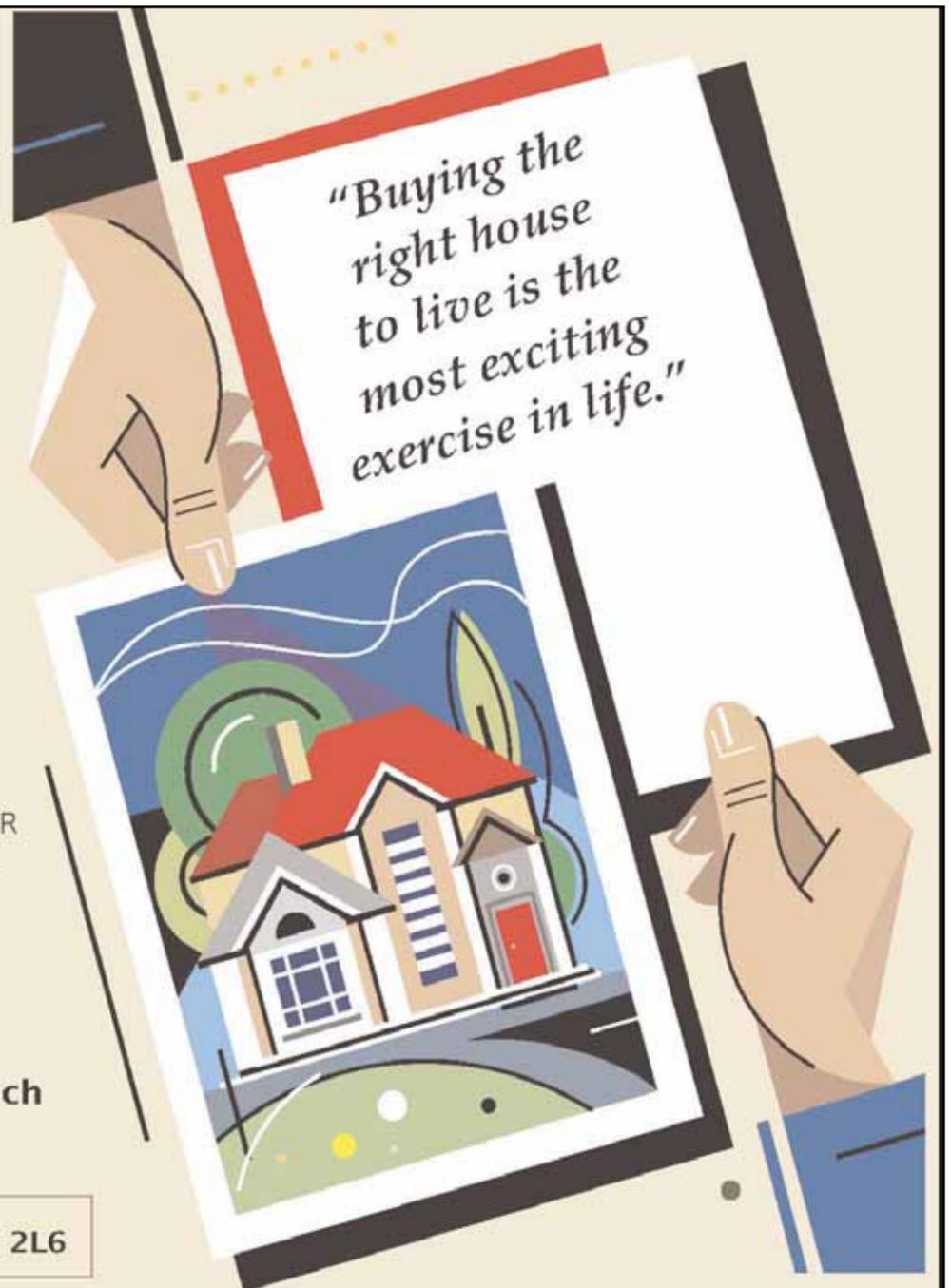
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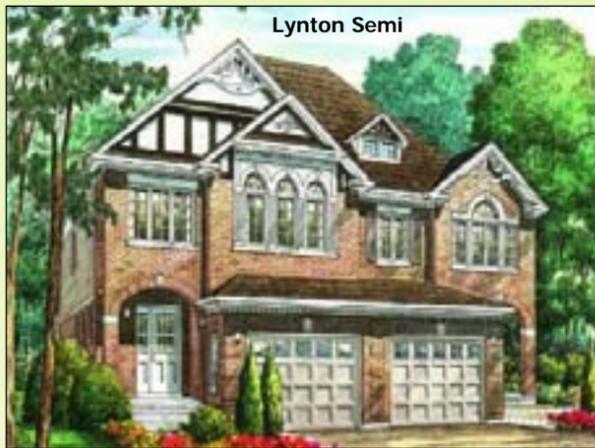
# JOHN BODDY HOMES PRESENTS 'EAGLE GLEN'

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Their gourmet kitchens, welcoming great rooms with cozy gas fireplaces and elegant dining rooms with coffered ceilings are all spacious and comfortable, making them the perfect location to enjoy time together with family or entertaining friends. In addition, some models include such impressive extras as classic French doors, transom windows and custom octagonal skylights allowing light to travel throughout the home for a bright and spacious feel.

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

Innovative floorplan designs combined with an extensive array of standard features included with every new home have become a corporate trademark of John Boddy Homes and 'Eagle Glen'. Not only does a John Boddy home offer such striking standard features, there are also a wealth



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

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

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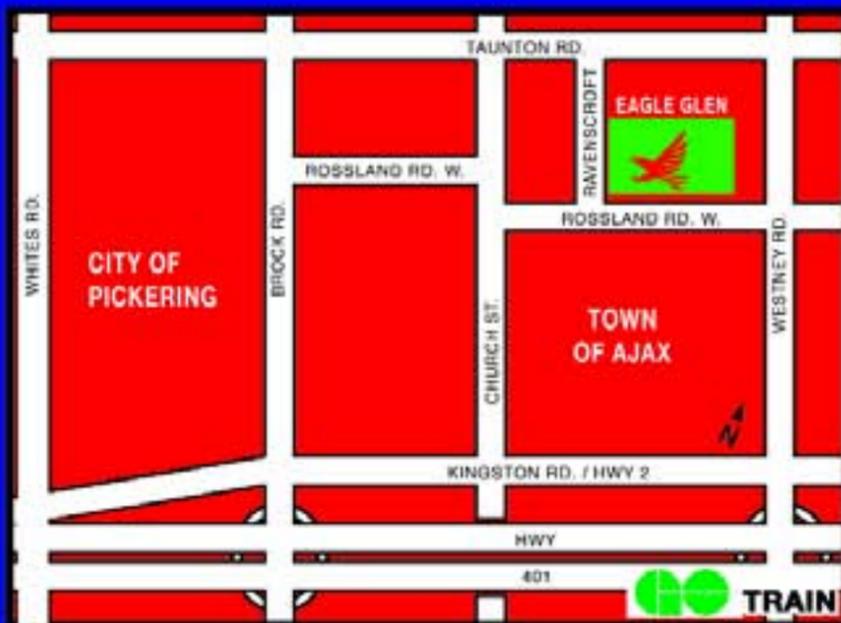
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# "Spook-tacular Halloween Celebrations for Coldwell Banker at their Exceptional Office"

By: Jennifer Savage

On Friday Oct. 29th, Coldwell Banker Exceptional Real Estate Services held its annual Halloween Spook-tacular potluck party. The office was decorated, and the sounds of laughter & music could be heard. Some agents & staff even dress up in their best costumes. There were hot devils, a swashbuckling pirate, a couple of saloon gals, the mighty Hercules and more. During the extended lunch period we were able to enjoy a variety of delicious dishes and great company.

Photo courtesy: Toni Colella



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## MONSOON NEWSLINES

TRINCOMALEE, SRI LANKA—

The weathered wooden bench that serves as an open-air confessional booth at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church doesn't enjoy much down time nowadays.

# Amid Sri Lanka's boom, life for Tamils remains bleak

It's not that more people are seeking forgiveness in this seaside chapel in Eastern province. Rather, parishioners have been flocking here just for the chance to sit with Father Cryton Outschoorn, to listen to his soothing assurance that their lives, clouded for so many years by fear and violence, are getting better.

"It seems like forever people here have been asking, 'what can happen to us next?' so it's not easy to give condolences," the 35-year-old priest said one recent morning. "Life still isn't easy in Sri Lanka but it is better than it was. I remind them that for years they have been praying for peace and now they finally have that. It's an answer to prayer."

Outschoorn's reminder notwithstanding, some Sri Lankans are struggling to be optimistic in the wake of the country's civil war, a venomous stretch of history that lasted from 1975 until May of last year, splintering society and leaving an estimated 70,000 dead.

On one hand, news coming out of this island nation off India's southern coast seems to be remarkably positive.

The government says foreign money is pouring into Sri Lanka now that suicide bombers and landmines are history. Economic growth is pegged at 8 per cent, unemployment is decreasing, inflation is in check, and a new International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved tax regime will bolster tax revenues.

"They have a once-in-a-generation-type story," says Koshy Mathai, an American who is the IMF's representative in Colombo.

Yet in many pockets of this palm-fringed nation, weary residents interviewed by the dozen tell a different tale. The prices of food, cooking oil and gas are at all-time high, they say, and the government is failing to follow through on a promise to give provincial councils more power over local administration. Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa promises to repair roads and bridges and broken spirits, yet some say development remains largely limited to the

western and southern regions of Sri Lanka, benefiting the country's Sinhalese majority.

But conditions in Sri Lanka's Northern province, the Tamil heartland, remain bleak and still mostly undocumented because local journalists self-censor their news coverage and access for the foreign press is still tightly restricted.

That is where the bulk of the 492 refugee claimants who landed a few months ago in

Vancouver aboard the ship Sun Sea call home.

Jehan Perera, the executive director of the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka in Colombo, recently visited Jaffna province and saw how the government has resettled some Tamil families after their release from IDP camps. Close to 300,000 people were forced out of their homes in the final days of fighting between rebels and soldiers and the government now says just 20,000 remain in its so-called "welfare centres."

Perera said he travelled up Sri Lanka's A-9 Highway, cut off a side road and drove for many kilometres before he reached a settlement.

"They were basically living in huts with no electricity, no toilets, no hopes for jobs," Perera said. "At night when it was pitch black, they talked about how poisonous snakes would come into their huts. For someone to say all these refugees in Canada should be returned here to be resettled like that, I just think, 'can't you give these people a break?'"

But a visitor to Sri Lanka doesn't need to journey to the remote north to get a sense for how social issues still simmer.

A Colombo newspaper called Virakesari reported this month that police officials were demanding local Tamil residents register with their office, said Mano Ganesan, a Tamil politician. "It shows that mindset of mistrust by is still there more than a year after the war," he said.

The report in Virakesari came only a few days after masked intruders burst into the offices of Siyatha, a TV and radio news broadcaster also based in the Sri Lankan capital. The media company upset government officials last year when it supported the failed presidential bid of former Sri Lankan general Sarath Fonseka. The intruders rampaged in the company's offices for 15 minutes, assaulted staff and set fires. Yet in a high-security section of the city that still has a string of police checkpoints, the intruders inexplicably vanished afterwards.

"Either Colombo is not safe, despite the near hysterical hype on security and the ubiquitous presence of gun-toting servicemen; or the attack on Sinatra was carried out with the knowledge of powers-that-be," the Asian Tribune newspaper wrote in an editorial about the break-in.

Other human-rights advocates point out The Economist magazine is routinely confiscated by customs agents when it dedicates coverage to current events here.

And it has resolutely refused to cooperate with a UN commission studying atrocities committed in the final days of the war.

Perera said the absence of media freedom is only one of several reasons he's anxious about Sri Lanka's future.

Sri Lanka's parliament last month passed an amendment to its constitution to remove presidential term limits, opening the door for Rajapaksa to run for a third term. The amendment also gives the president unfettered ability to both appoint and sack Supreme Court judges, members of the human rights and electoral commissions, and the country's police chief.

"The separation of powers and checks and balances are all breaking down," Perera said.

At the same time, there are growing concerns over the lack of progress toward a political resolution with the country's Tamil minority. Instead of salving wounds, some critics say the government is exacerbating them.

In Jaffna, a city of bullet-scarred and dilapidated buildings in Sri Lanka's north that was the de facto capital of The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the cold-blooded separatist group that paralyzed the country's progress for so many years, Sri Lanka's military has bulldozed L.T.T.E. cemeteries and erected a monument to the country's fallen soldiers.

Neil Buhne, a Canadian and the Chief of the United Nations mission here, said the 1 million residents of Sri Lanka's northern province Jaffna remain emotionally fragile and wondered why the government didn't instead erect something to commemorate the country's collective losses.

"They've gone through hell," Buhne said. "The bulldozing of cemeteries and building a war memorial to soldiers is not a confidence-building measure. They don't need to do it."

In the eastern cities of Trincomalee and Batticaloa, cities that were hard hit by the tsunami in December 2004, Sri Lanka's war continues to claim victims. The main hospital in Batticaloa,

for instance, is admitting a record number of battered women.

"We have at least 10 new cases a day and many have husbands who are turning to alcohol or drugs because they can't cope with feelings of isolation and loneliness after the war," said Jayatheepa Pathasri, a mental-health care worker.

Pathasri herself is a casualty of Sri Lanka's conflict.

Fourteen months ago—more than a month after the war's offi-

the Indian cellphone company Airtel are gradually moving into the east and helping spur the local economy.

In a river front hotel in Batticaloa on a recent evening, executives with Unilever held a celebratory party for 20 local distributors. The consumer-goods giant sells about \$500,000 worth of products in the city each month, said Basil Fernando, a Unilever territory manager. When he arrived here two years ago,



Father Cryton

cial conclusion—the 26-year-old's husband, a taxi cab driver, walked out of their home and looked back over his shoulder, hollering he'd see his wife and son later that night after work. He never came home.

"His brother was a member of LTTE but not him," said Pathasri, wearing a mustard-coloured sari with her hair pulled back neatly and held by a brown pin. "I think the government soldiers took him, but there are lots of stories like this."

Even though Pathasri said some residents are struggling to cope following the end of the civil war, other locals insist they're anxious to move on and rebuild, something they literally couldn't afford to do for years. In LTTE-controlled swaths of the country, even renovating a modest home would bring a visit from LTTE brass demanding a contribution to the cause.

"If you had money to fix the bullet holes in your house, they figured you had money to help the cause," a restaurant owner in Batticaloa said with a sigh.

But now, there are tangible signs of optimism in Sri Lanka's beleaguered East, which until 2006 was controlled by the rebel group.

Travellers who brave the jarring nine-hour train ride from Colombo see roads lined with cement bags and sheets of steel. Repairs to the road linking Batticaloa and Trincomalee should be completed in months, cutting the driving time to two hours from the current eight.

Businesses, meantime, like

monthly sales were about \$280,000.

As his customers munched on chicken wings and sipped arrack, a local spirit made from fermented coconuts, a young woman wearing a green dress and ankle bangles danced to traditional Tamil music. Signboards taped on the walls promoted Unilever's 10 rupee Astra margarine — you don't need to put it in a cooler — and its new Lux soap brand, which Fernando was sure would be a fast seller. "It's an expensive party but it's worth it," he said, smiling. "The market is booming."

There is similarly positive news further north up the coast in Trincomalee, a city of 350,000 where cement and flour factories and a flurry of fishing trawlers are the largest local employers.

While soldiers still patrol city streets, locals say they are relieved to be rid of the military checkpoints that until recently dotted the roads like 10-yard lines on a football field. Local fishermen are now allowed to take their boats out at night, something that was impossible to do during the war.

The military also seems to be trying to repair its image with locals. In coming weeks, a new reality TV show will debut in Sri Lanka that will be styled after America's Got Talent. Members of the military will compete against one another in competitions of dancing, singing and juggling. The show's underlying message: soldiers are people, too.

Contd. in next page ...

# The Dussehra celebration



Shri Ram Mandir had set up 12-14 feet huge effigy of Ravana. This effigy of the ten-headed Ravana was burnt at sunset celebrating the triumph of forces of "good" over the forces of "evil". The festival of Dussehra, also known as "Vijaydashmi" is one of the fascinating festivals of Hindus and is celebrated with joy and enthusiasm. Vijay Dashmi, the day signifying victory of good over evil after ten-day battle between the forces of Lord Rama and Ravana, was celebrated with religious fervour, gaiety and peace and people from all walks of life exchanged greetings on Dussehra with friends and relatives.

Pandit Roopnauth Sharma the spiritual leader of Shri Ram Mandir after offering prayers, lit the huge effigy which was, stuffed -- with dry straw to the encouraging shouts of "Ramchandra ki jai", "Victory to Rama", and a large fire rippled through the sky. Thus ended the 10th day of the Dussehra festival which was celebrated here with great fanfare with hundreds of old and young people who had

assembled at Shri Ram Mandir in anticipation to have a glimpse of the burning of Ravana.

This festival has immense mythological significance. As per Ramayan, Lord Ram did Chandipuja and invoked the blessings of Maa Durga to kill Ravana, the ten-headed king who had abducted Sita. Maa Durga divulged the secret to Lord Ram how he could kill Ravana. Then after vanquishing him, Lord Ram with Sita, Laxman and Hanuman returned victorious to his kingdom of Ayodhya.

Dussehra literally means the tenth day. It marks the end of the nine days of Navratri.

**Kanayalal Raina**



# 'Make Wills while hale and hearty' - Of Wills and POA's

A seminar on Wills and Powers of Attorney was organized by the Mens' Ministry of the TCCC recently at Scarborough. The purpose of the seminar was to enlighten the membership about the need to make the Wills and Power of attorney at the proper time without leading to confusion and skirmishes at one's unexpected demise.

Many of us are hesitant to think of these things until the very last minute. Most of us who are immigrants are not aware of the implications of these documents in Canada. Those who have assets in Canada should do well to prepare their Wills or POA's in time in order to relieve their kith

and kin of unnecessary hassles. We live in a world where every thing is planned and done according to need of the hour. In Canada, one could even plan his funeral before his demise.

The seminar was led by Samuel Chinniah, a senior vice-president of the TE Wealth, Financial Consultants. There were nearly thirty participants and they all participated actively in the deliberations and cleared their doubts. It was generally accepted that anyone who has assets should have a Will.

It would minimize complications on competing claims and minimize cost of overall estate settlement. People with minor



children have to decide on guardianship. If one dies without a Will, the government decides how one's assets are distributed. When asked whether Wills or POA's made out in Canada are applicable to assets in Sri Lanka, the speaker said that it is better to have them done in Sri Lanka itself as it would take time to arrive at a settlement..

Glen James, the president of the Men's Ministry should be commended for organizing a seminar of this nature. One needs enlightenment in all aspects of life and that's why Jesus said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

## Amid Sri Lanka boom ... Contd. from pg 32

As a young woman in a pink sari and a yellow reflective vest swept garbage from a stretch of beach in Trincomalee, Thussi Ponnampalam, the 28-year-old manager of a small 10-room seaside guest house here that charges 1,500 rupees (\$13.50 Canadian) a night showed a visitor his vision of an expanded hotel with an all-day barbecue pit and surf shop.

"How long are we going to have fighting? There's no future in that," he said.

In 1990, Ponnampalam said his father was stopped by Sri Lankan soldiers at a checkpoint. "He wasn't doing anything wrong but because he didn't have money to pay off the soldier he was shot in the head," Ponnampala said matter-of-factly. "But it's all politics and we can either keep worrying about that and living in the past or move on. I choose to move on."

Others seem to be willing to following suit.

While Sri Lanka's northern province will contribute a mere 3.3 per cent to the country's GDP this year, according to government estimates, money is beginning to flow into the region. The U.S. government is investing in a plant near Jaffna to make high-end blue jeans for customers such as Levi's and J.C. Penney. New restaurants and hotels opening along the A9 are mostly owned by local Tamils, according to an August report in Time magazine.

India is promising \$800 million in low-interest loans to help redevelop the north and east and is building 50,000 new homes in the once war-hobbled zone — nearly one-third of the 160,000 new homes the U.N. says are required.

China, similarly, is also vying for the affection of Sri Lanka's

government and has promised \$500 million to build new seaports, a power grid, and a new highway in the east.

Despite the increased foreign investment and the steady flow of "good news" stories that salt the front-pages of Sri Lanka's several English newspapers, some Sri Lankans say they worry that Rajapaksa's government show no signs of being willing to loosen its grip on power.

In the east, for instance, a civilian government elected by locals is now in place, headed by a 34-year-old former child soldier named Pillayan, who was an LTTE before bolting to join the government. Yet the government has also established a governor in the East, a former military general, who can veto any legislation passed by Pillayan's elected officials.

In 2008, the governor nixed a new law that would have introduced motor vehicle licensing fees, a venture that could have raised as much as 1 billion rupees (\$100 million) a year for the province, said Dr. K. Vigneswaran, a former member of Sri Lanka's parliament who is now an adviser to Pillayan. More recently, the governor killed an effort to pass a bill that would have allowed the provincial government to formally collect contributions from the Sri Lankan diaspora.

"They want us tied down," Vigneswaran said in an interview. "They don't want the North or the East provinces to be financially sound."

In Trincomalee, like other areas of the North and East, there are concerns now that the government is colonizing the region with Sinhalese migrants from the south by offering them inducements to accept good jobs and

cheap land. Recently, the federal government offered 50 prime beach front plots in Trincomalee to be developed into new hotels. The plots were virtually free, Vigneswaran said, yet no Tamils bid for them, even after he attended a December meeting in Vienna with a group of Tamil expats and pleaded with them to invest.

"They asked what promises we could offer that the government wouldn't take their money," Vigneswaran said. "I said, 'well what promises did the LTTE give you when you were giving them money?' They didn't answer. And they didn't invest."

As dusk settled on Trincomalee, a group of teenagers jumped on a small blue and white boat used by divers to catch clown fish from a nearby reef. Ponnampalam, with a head of thick curly black hair and a wide smile, navigated his way past a herd of cows lazing on the beach and grinned and waved at a Russian air force pilot who was staying at his small guest house.

"I think our country has had enough of the fighting," Ponnampala said. "We know that the government doesn't believe in us. The sad thing is some people here don't believe in themselves either. But with no war now anything is possible. We have to hold that close."

**- Rick Westhead  
- Toronto Star**

An article written last month by TORONTO STAR writer Rick Westhead after his recent visit to the island nation, reproduced above explains the plight of Tamils in North and East and analyzes why some of them chose to flee the country seeking safe refuge in countries like Canada



## LETTERS & OPINIONS

By M.K.Eelaventhan

The sudden death of Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai M.P theoretician of the Tamil Liberation Movement on 31st March 1981 removed from the political scene of the island of Ceylon a statesman who possessed a clear vision for the Tamil nation and Tamils future. The concept of "futurology" in political science or avathu arithal in Kural, was fully understood by him. Words could not explain our grief when he passed away, on 31st March 1981, on the 3rd Birth Anniversary day of the late lamented leader, Mr. S.J.V. Chelvanayakam the mosos of Tamil Eelam.

His death acquired an added significance because he died in Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu, during his mission to create the necessary Tamil atmosphere and to secure India's sympathy for our noble cause which he was championing at the time. Before his visit to Chennai, he wrote letters to Dr. R. Janarthanam and to me, to do the spade work, in India, to meet the prominent leaders of all parties in particular Indra Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, University deans, legal luminaries and heads of important institutions like the civic rights movements, Amnesty International and Gandhian peace foundation. But fate destined it otherwise and before we could meet the above personalities death snatched him away at the prime of his life.

Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai was born on the 24th of October 1924 and did his degree in Philosophy at the University of Ceylon. Later he did his law and was one of the leading civil lawyers of Ceylon. The duration of his earthly life was just 57 years, a half a century and seven years added to it.

He unsuccessfully contested the Yalpanam seat in 1960 as a candidate of the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Katchi. However from 1965 he remained as M.P. representing Kopya till his death.

His contribution in parliament was limited. He felt his efforts through debates would prove futile as he could not succeed in bringing a change of heart among members, so long as the parliament was dominated by a determine brute Sinhala majority. The leading Sinhala parties had preconceived notions as they continue the same at all times, on fun-

# Tribute: S. Kathiravelupillai M.P,

## The Theoretician of the Tamil Liberation Movement

damental issues pertaining to the Tamil nation.

The perpetual rule of the permanent majority, he felt, would make his speeches in parliament just a cry in the wilderness. Yet on important occasions he did make speeches so that they may go on for posterity and on such occasions the entire lot of members in parliament, listened with rapt attention. What he said was completely different both in content and in the manner of delivery. Even at mass public meetings, he made short speeches which people listened to in stunned silence, as what he said was always new and profound.

He was always at his best in group discussions and at seminars. Very often I had witnessed his audience listening in spell bound silence. No foreign delegate or foreign correspondent, ever thought that their visit to Yalpanam was complete without meeting with Mr. Kathiravelupillai. Often I heard foreign dignitaries declare the "He spoke, the listened, their doubts being cleared, they were conquered in turn. His logical approach his legal acumen and his philosophical bent of mind always brought in the desired change in the minds of his audience" Their conversion was often visible.

In 1958 he headed a team in Yalpanam to provide relief for the Tamil evacuees who were beaten and driven out by the Sinhalese hoodlums, during the Sinhala Tamil riots of 1958. With natural tenacity, he possessed a super Human capacity with which he tackled critical situations in such a manner that he earned the respect and love of all. In 1961 he headed the antigovernment Sathiyagraha campaign in Mannar and maintained the morale of the struggle at a high level. His philosophical attitude to life's problems and his natural wit and humour helped his followers to maintain unity, discipline and decorum even at most crucial junctures of our struggle. Even when the military indulged in violence and tried to provoke the masses, he stood like a rock and maintained peace and tranquillity.

Mr. Kathiravelupillai was a powerful intellectual and had varied interests in life. If he had lead a calm and peaceful life, he could have brought out volumes that would have helped in his creative activities. His three book Glimpses



**S. Kathiravelupillai M.P**  
(24th – October 1924 -  
31st March 1981)

of Western Philosophy. The translation of Umar Kayam Songs, his small pamphlet titled "coexistence, and not confrontation" will always speak of his intellectual qualities, for generations to come.

Mr. Kathiravelupillai was never a mass leader nor did he ever aspire for such a status. Garlands, mass ovations, personal platitudes etc. never appealed to him. Very often he would say that we were attaching too much importance to personalities" was the advice he often gave us.

Typical of a civil lawyer, he never indulged in unnecessary verbiage. For love of words he was never prepared to lose a case. Every word that he uttered, whether it be in Tamil or in English conveyed deep and profound thought and they have become quotable quotes among the Tamil masses. With an ever-shining smile radiating on his face, he would often say "Winning a case is easy but winning a cause is difficult. It is his time that we concentrate and make sacrifices to win causes rather than cases". When he spoke of Ceylon, he would say "that it was not a country but an island consisting of two nations".

He would add further "The lack of recognition of this fundamental truth is the cause for all the political ills of the island "The Sinhalese and the Tamils were never historically one and the amalgamation of the Sinhala Territory and the Tamil Territory which was brought in by the British was for their administrative convenience. This bondage must be broken" This was the constant advice that he gave us. In a comparative study of what was prevailing in South Africa and Ceylon, he put it in a nutshell the following words. "Racial discrimination

in South Africa is skin deep but in Ceylon it is soul deep". Rarely can a person speak profound truth in such a gripping language. Such a quality he possessed immensely.)

When he spoke of freedom, he did not say that we wanted freedom for the sake of freedom. Even to cure the economic ills of the Tamils he said "Political freedom is a must". He agreed with his Sinhala brethren that the presence of the Tamils in the Sinhala Territory is a hindrance to their way of life and that it pollutes their political atmosphere and therefore he suggested that the Sinhalese could preserve the Sinhala Buddhist culture in its pristine purity. This reveals his profound political thought to say the most unpalatable truth in a most inoffensive way.

To the Tamils he constantly advised that they had no future in the South of Ceylon, right in the Sinhala territory. More than the question of preserving the sentiment of culture and language of the Tamils, their very physical survival demands that they must get back to their Tamil homeland, the north and eastern provinces of Ceylon. The 1958, 1977,1983 Sinhala, Tamil riots, twice within 30 years have unfolded to us in a telling language what the future holds for the Tamils. Another political foreboding he often revealed to us was that. "We must lose Colombo the Sinhala capital and gain Trincomalee the Tamil Capital. "He who holds Trincomalee holds the key to The Indian Ocean" This revelation of the British Prime Minister Lord Wellington in the 19th Century was always a reminder in his mind.

"Brevity is the soul of wit" and in keeping with this maxim he often asked us to repeat this "new Kural Stanza" that he composed for us to meet the exigencies of the time. The stanza reads as follows (If the Tamils are to survive as a separate entity they must rule themselves). This was not out of hatred for anybody but the recognition of our historic past and the historic truth that no nation could preserve its identity and individuality at the mercy of another nation however good or generous it may be. The past as well as the present history of the world continues to remind us of the profundity and nobility of his utterances.

Another utterance of his

which keeps on ringing in our ears is that in a freedom struggle we cannot be mere onlookers or observers. Freedom struggle is not a cricket or a football match for us to watch and comment for or against it. In a freedom struggle there is no place for spectators. All of us should be participants in our own way. Our contribution for the freedom struggle may vary in form, and substance, but we have all got our parts to play. This is a foregone conclusion. This truth our Kathiravelupillai put in the following Tamil phrase."

The last advice he gave me personally before I left the shores of Tamil Eelam on my propaganda mission to India, especially the part I have to play in the capital at Delhi, was as follows Tamil Eelam independence and Indian security are inseparable. Therefore it should be the duty of the Indian government to find a peaceful and honourable solution to the Tamil problem in Ceylon. If a solution is not found in the near future the intervention of the power blocs in Trincomalee will be a permanent danger to the Indian ocean and Indian security. Therefore let the Indian government give us a helping hand to settle the Tamil problem and establish permanent Security and safeguard to the India subcontinent." This advice of his I strictly adhered and Delhi political circles favourably responded once to my call. This message I conveyed to Mr. Kathiravelupillai and he congratulated me on the right path that I was attempting. It was his last letter to. But before he could complete his mission and make it a total reality, the cruel hands of death snatched his away from us.

The void that has been created by his demise is not easy to fill. But we who are his disciples, nurtured and trained by his with love and care, will carry his mission to its logical conclusion. The restoration of Tamil Eelam is not a distant cry. We hope to achieve it in the very near future. "It not now, when? If not we who?" This is the noble mission that is driving us to action. The achievement of this goal will be the fitting tribute that we could offer to his loving memory.

*(M.K Eelaventhan is Former Member of Parliament (Sri Lanka) and Member of Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam, Representing Canada)*

# South Indian Artist Dr. A.K.C. Nadarajan receives gesture of respect at Tamil Cultural Nite in Waterloo

Waterloo: Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo region had a rare honour of respecting South India's greatest clarinet artist "Clarinet Everest" Dr.A.K.C. Natarajan.

The artists performed a Clarinet and Thavil musical program on Saturday, Oct 23rd at the

University of Waterloo. This year's cultural nite was its 10th year anniversary event.

They were presented with "Ponn Aadai" or Golden shawl and awards by Hon. Gary Goodyear, Canadian Minister of State for Science and Technology at the Humanities Theatre, University of

Waterloo. President of the association, Mr. Prakash Venkataraman was in hand to honour the guests.

Dr. Natarajan was accompanied by Kalaimamani Mannargudi Vasudevan on Thavil, Swami malai Gurunathan and Mr. A. Murugathas of Nathaswara Thavil International, Toronto.

Guests totalling 500 witnessed this special event.

All programs were of excellent quality and it gave the young artists too a chance to show case their talent. Awards were presented to all students and their teachers. Snacks were distributed free to all guests, at the end



of the show, by complimentary of Datta Foods, Scarborough, Ontario.



Balakrishnan, Logan, Dr. A K C Nadarajan and Murugathas



President Prakash Venkataraman



Minister of State (Science & Technology) Hon. Gary Goodyear presenting to Mannargudi Vasudevan



Minister of State (Science & Technology) Hon. Gary Goodyear presenting to Swami malai Gurunathan



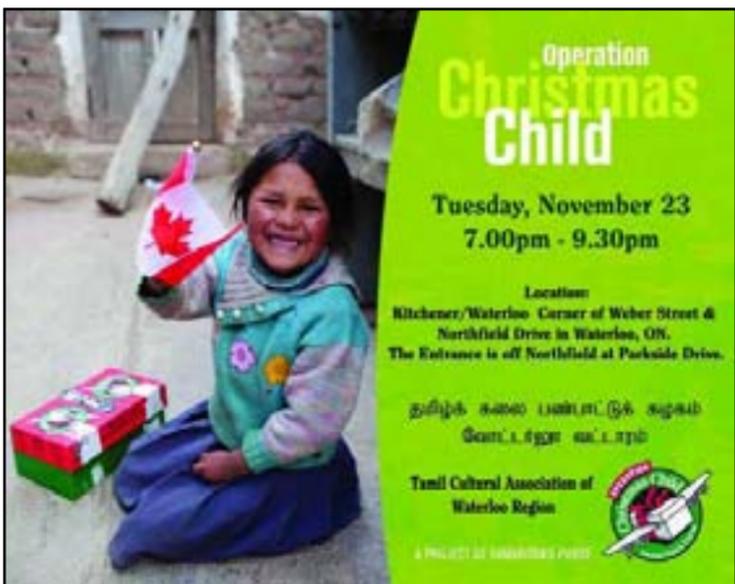
Minister of State (Science & Technology) Hon. Gary Goodyear presenting to Dr. Nadarajan



Minister of State (Science & Technology) Hon. Gary Goodyear presenting to Toronto's Murugathas



Kavingar Kanthavanam presenting to Teacher who trained the students for the cultural performance



## GO service likely one train a day to Guelph

If GO Trains come to Guelph next year, it now seems likely that initial service will consist of just one train a day to and from Toronto, a city official says.

GO Transit can bring a single train a day here without having to spend money on track improvements west of Georgetown or on an additional train platform and a Kiss 'n' Ride facility near Guelph's VIA station, says Rajan Philips, the city's manager of transportation planning and development engineering.

"That seems to be the thinking," Philips said in an interview Tuesday.

The initial one GO Train per day would be in addition to three VIA trains that go through Guelph in each direction daily. However, only one of VIA's daily trains is "usable for commuters," because of the times they run, he said, so a rush-period GO Train would double the number of trains avail-

able to Guelph commuters who work in Toronto.

Philips said he has also heard that VIA and GO Transit are considering joint service on the North Mainline route through Guelph, so that commuters could mix and match which train they take, depending on which train time suits them best.

Future expansion in the frequency of GO Trains running between Waterloo Region and Toronto through Guelph is also expected to be coordinated between GO and VIA, Philips says. It's expected GO Train service through Guelph could be increased in the future perhaps to a level of hourly train service in both directions, he said.

Philips stressed that no official announcement about initial GO Train service to Guelph has yet been made by GO Transit or by the provincial government. All that's known for sure is that GO

has bought land south of the tracks near the VIA station for a Kiss 'n' Ride facility and is in the process of hiring a consultant, who will draw up plans for it and a south train platform in Guelph, he said.

Building a new train platform south of the existing one at the local VIA station would allow eastbound and westbound trains to use different platforms in Guelph.

Initial GO Train service of one eastbound GO train to Toronto in the morning and one westbound train back to Guelph in the afternoon would restore the level of service that existed when GO Trains came to Guelph for a while in the early 1990s, Philips noted.

In 2008, city hall officials were talking about initial GO train service to Guelph and Kitchener in 2011 likely consisting of four trains during each rush period.

# Pakistan: NO WAY HOME FOR POOREST DISPLACED

Thousands of flood victims in Quetta, capital of Pakistan's south-western Balochistan Province, say they are stranded and unable to get home.

Most of the displaced arrived in mid-August looking for relief aid after floods inundated districts in eastern Balochistan and neighbouring Sindh province. More than two months later, they say they do not have the means to get back.

Inadequate transport arrangements by the provincial governments, combined with the fact that many who left homes in a panic did not carry much cash, are key factors in the slow rate of return. Of the 61,000 displaced who arrived in Balochistan, Pakistan's poorest province, nearly 90 percent are still there, according to the National Disaster Management Authority.

"We had very little cash with us when we fled. Now I have Rs500 [US\$5.88] in my pocket, and it is insufficient to hire any kind of vehicle to get back," Allah Yar, 40, told IRIN. He said he had been doing odd jobs to try and earn money "but it is hard finding work in a strange city."

Allah Yar and his family of five, including a wife who is eight months pregnant, had been trucked the 250km from their home near the town of Dera Murad Jamali, Nasirabad District, Balochistan Province, when the area was evacuated by the authorities.

“ WE HAD VERY LITTLE CASH WITH US WHEN WE FLED. NOW I HAVE RS500 [US\$5.88] IN MY POCKET, AND IT IS INSUFFICIENT TO HIRE ANY KIND OF VEHICLE TO GET BACK, ”

Stuck

"No one has thought about how we will get back," said Sagheer Ahmed, 30, who needs to travel a little further than Allah Yar to reach his home in Jacobabad District, Sindh Province. "People there are now busy building their homes, but we are still stuck here and have received no compensation - though fortunately there is plenty of food."

He said he was "very eager" to get back home so he could start planting his fields.

"We do not want to be stuck here. It is not nice for us women to have no privacy, and to share toilets with so many. It is also very cold here at night," said Amroz Bibi, 50, also from Jacobabad. Temperatures in Quetta have been falling as winter draws in.

The rate of return of the displaced has been better in other provinces. For example in Punjab, "where 3.5



Displaced people fleeing Sindh streamed into Balochistan pic by: Abdul Majeed Goraya/IRIN

million people had been displaced, all but 10 percent have gone back", said Saleem Rehmat, a spokesman for the International Organization of Migration.

Lt-Col Amer Siddique, Director Operations at the National Disaster

Management Authority, told IRIN: "There is no national programme to facilitate returns, but the provincial authorities are making some arrangements for this."

He said 95 percent of displaced people had returned home in Khy-

ber-Pakhtoonkhwa Province, 50 percent in Sindh and 10-15 percent in Balochistan. "Water is still present in villages that were flooded in Sindh and Balochistan, so people cannot go back," he added.

IRIN News

## BANGLADESH MIGRANTS FARE BADLY IN ITALY

Relocating to Italy for work might not be such a good deal for Bangladeshis, says a report on the social impact of migration in Bangladesh released on Oct 31st.

"Migrants who have left recently have not been able, so far, to establish themselves in Italy in terms of finding a viable living in either business or employment... let alone remit money home," said Nicoletta Del Franco, who carried out the study in Brahman Baria Sadar, eastern Bangladesh.

Commissioned by Terre des Hommes Italia (TDH), facilitated by the WARBE Development Foundation, and funded by the European Union, the study focused primarily on families affected by a new trend of migration from Bangladesh to Italy, the second most popular destination in Europe after the UK.

"Migration has long been an important livelihood strategy for the people of Bangladesh. Though most attention is devoted to remittances and their uses, it is also important to promote migrants' rights and look into the situation faced by families who are left behind," said Patrizia Gattoni, TDH country representative in Bangladesh.

### Fixer fees

According to the Italian Bureau of Statistics (ISTAT), around 70,000 Bangladeshi's are regularly residing in Italy; a number which doubles if you include those who arrived



Many men in Bangladesh migrate to Italy to work as labourers photo: David Swanson/IRIN

through alternative methods, according to an estimate of the ISMU Foundation. The research shows some migrants pay up to \$20,000 to different kinds of intermediaries with a promise, not always fulfilled, of obtaining proper documentation and a job, often as a labourer. Others take higher risks by trying to enter through irregular channels for up to \$10,000.

As a result, only relatively prosperous families can support the huge cost of legal migration, which typically requires borrowing a large sum of money.

In the current financial environment, the traditional method of sending money home to pay off this debt and supporting the family is becoming less feasible, leading to more and more stranded migrants, some even needing relatives in Bangladesh to support them financially.

Families with inadequate savings run the risk of losing their land, putting pressure on the women and children to provide economic support.

"The report highlights the need to create safety nets for parents, wives and children to [help them] face possible situations of economic difficulty... [and] find ways to raise awareness of the potential hazards of migration," Del Franco said.

Another research paper to be released simultaneously looks at Bangladeshi migrant workers in the Italian labour market.

In 2009 Bangladeshis working overseas sent back more than US\$10.7 billion, according to the International Organization for Migration - more than the total amount of international aid to Bangladesh.

The total number of Bangladeshis - both legal and illegal - in Italy is over 135,000, according to the ISMU Foundation, an independent organization promoting research on multi-ethnicity.

IRIN News

## Afghanistan: More war victims, fewer landmine casualties



In addition to artificial limbs amputees need social rehabilitation Photo by: Akmal Dawi/IRIN

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has opened its seventh prosthetic and orthotic centre in Afghanistan to help rehabilitate permanently disabled people, but the man leading the programme says more centres are needed.

Alberto Cairo, who has led ICRC's orthopaedic programme in Afghanistan for 20 years, says he has never sat back for a moment at his busy duty station where new amputees seek artificial limbs every day.

"We're always running here," Cairo told IRIN at the

centre in Kabul where over 300 staff, all of them with permanent disabilities, work.

The most recent ICRC prosthetic centre to open (in August) is in Lashkargah, capital of the southern province of Helmand. It has already dealt with over 60 amputees.

"It's almost impossible for people in Marjah District [in Helmand Province] to bring their patients to Kabul," Cairo, who speaks fluent Dari, said. "I think 6-7 more centres are needed."

Over the past two decades almost 100,000 people have been assisted at ICRC's ortho-

pedic centres. Of these, over 24,667 were landmine victims and the rest were paraplegics or people disabled by war, polio or spinal injuries.

The ICRC spends about US\$18 million on its orthopaedic centres every year.

Rising casualties As armed conflict intensifies, casualty figures are rising.

The number of civilians killed and wounded as a result of fighting rose by 31 percent in the first half of 2010 compared to the same period last year, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reported.

The ICRC said the number of war casualties taken to a hospital it supports in Kandahar Province had risen sharply. Almost 1,000 war victims were registered at the hospital in August and September - 100 percent more than in the same period last year.

"We are receiving more double amputees [people losing both legs] which points to the severity of their casualties [caused by improvised explosive devices - IEDs]," said Cairo, adding that most victims (85 percent) were adult male.

See Page 38...

WORDS OF PEACE

# Peace: The Best News

In a world where everything changes, the good news is that there is one thing that remains unchanged, says Maharaji, who travels the world to speak about a practical way for individuals to experience peace.

"Find out what it is that doesn't change," he advises, "because the day you do, you will begin to live. You will begin to understand. That is the day you will begin to be thankful."

Maharaji began speaking about fulfilling a fundamental need for peace when he was very young. "What you are looking for is inside of you," he says. "This is good news. It's the best news." By the time he reached his teens, he had started traveling outside his native India to bring this message to the world.

Maharaji asks people to think about what peace really means.

"Is peace the absence of war?" he asks. "If peace were the absence of war, then definitely we've had peace. So how can it be that from that peace, war comes again? What kind of peace is that? Peace is not the absence of war.

"Is peace when economies do well? Some people think that. If it is when everybody's fed and everyone's doing great, then why is it that great economies in this world fall, and that rich countries have no reluctance to go to war?"

"If we look for a peace that is defined by our minds, then that peace and its definition will change as generations, cultures, outlooks, and fashions change," Maharaji says. "Yet there is one thing that has never changed—and that is the true desire for peace that resides in the heart of every single human being.

"What you are looking for is inside of you. Rejoice. The journey to peace is not solemn. The journey to peace is full of enthusiasm, newness, discovery, openness.

"Find within the thirst for



questions are fundamental. Until you understand the quest that brings these questions, you will never find your reality.

Q: What you're saying sounds good. How do I get peace?

A: The first thing you have to understand is that this is the wrong question. Why? Because peace is already inside of you. You don't need to get it. You've got it. How can you find something you've never lost? You think peace is away from you. You're mistaken. It is not away from you. It lies in your heart. Be silent and listen to your thirst. Be silent and listen—not to the noise, but to what the heart has to say.

peace, and that thirst will lead to the water within."

Maharaji frequently answers questions to help people understand his message.

Q: Is it really true that every human being is looking for peace? It seems to me that a lot of people just want to be happy.

A: Whether you call it peace, contentment, happiness, or joy, it's the same thing, and that one thing is your truth. People know more about their friends than they know about themselves. Who are we? Why are we here? A long, long time ago, some person must have looked up at the stars and asked these questions, and they're still being asked. For as long as there are human beings, they will be asked, because these

Q: What is your role in this?

A: More than anything, I hope I can inspire you to think a little bit about what peace really is. Those who need to search should search. If you don't find it, look within. If you can't find it within, I can help. Our eyes can see everything and everyone, but if they want to see themselves—if we want to see our eyes with our own eyes—we need a mirror. I have something that's like a mirror. In this mirror, you can see your own true reflection.

For a free DVD, call 1 877 707 3221 Toll Free

To learn more about Maharaji, visit

www.wopg.org  
www.tprf.org

It is very important that the spiritual dimension of life is brought into everybody's lives. Why many people have developed an allergy to spirituality is because somebody always told them, 'spirituality means leaving everything and going to the mountains.' Even if you want to go, there is not enough space for all of you there. You had better learn how to be spiritual in your office, in your home, on the streets, wherever you are. You had better learn that because spirituality is about your interiority, not what you do outside. Spirituality is an inner science to create a conductive inner atmosphere because the quality of your life is dependent on how you are within yourself. That quality this moment depends on how

## Allergic to Spirituality



joyous, how peaceful you are. This dimension you have completely neglected. Unless you do something to the inner, you will not know what it is to be peaceful, to be joyous, you will not know how to go beyond the limitations of being just a physical body and mind.

See, your body is simply accumulations of what you have gathered from the Earth – when you leave you can't take an atom of this body. So this body is not really yours. Your mind is not yours too. It is also just an accumulation – what you have gathered from the backgrounds in which you were brought up in life. So there is something else which needs to be looked at beyond these dimensions.

Even if I erase all your memory, still you will be here. Yes? Your family will disappear, your status will disappear, your business will disappear, everything that you own in the world will disappear. But still you are here. So beyond all the things that you identify yourself with, still there is something called as 'you'. That 'you' is not subject to what you accumulate from outside. But unfortunately that 'you' has been so much covered, so much crowded with other things that you never allowed yourself to look at that. You always thought that what you are identified with is much more important than who you really are. Now if your focus shifts, then



the other dimension can start opening up for you.

The whole process of spiritual science, yoga in particular, is to somehow elevate you to an experience that is beyond the five sense organs. When you transcend the limited experience of what you know as yourself, your experience of life is naturally in a different dimension. Then you begin to experience that which is not physical, the spiritual, the Divinity of your true nature. If you are ready and willing to experi-

ence life in a deeper dimension, to be truly happy, I have methods. Then you can begin to experience the joy, the blissfulness of knowing who you really are.

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

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

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

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# WHEN THE BRAIN DRAIN IS HEALTHY FOR DEMOCRACY

By Laura Freschi

The endurance of Indian democracy is one of the great Indian puzzles. How has a population so large, so ethnically and linguistically fragmented, and so economically unequal managed to sustain a participatory democracy since 1947? What forces have kept the country politically stable, enabling the rapid economic growth of the past two decades?

One intriguing answer comes from political scientist Devesh Kapur, who studies the political effects of skilled migration (the so-called brain drain) on migrants' home countries. In a new book presented recently at the Center for Global Development, Kapur finds:

[T]he positive selection of Indian migrants through education has strengthened India's democracy by creating a political space for previously excluded social groups. Because older Indian elites have an exit option, they are less likely to resist the loss of political power at home.

Governments have historically used emigration as a pressure valve, to rid themselves of political dissidents and other undesirables, and preserve stability at home. After the Paris-wide workers riots of 1848, the French

“members of the upper class that chose exit have still retained their voice: their continuing influence in Indian politics perpetuates social inequalities.”

government tried shaking their “subversive elements” by offering them land grants in Algeria. Kapur also cites the examples of Cuba and Zimbabwe, where leaders allowed the periodic exodus of discontented citizens as a deliberate strategy to keep their hold on political power while migrants' remittances helped keep things going economically.



In the decades following independence in India, Kapur argues, the migration of India's high caste, highly-educated elite allowed more middle and lower caste Indians empowered by new voting rights to seek more political power and a bigger share of economic pie. In the 1990s, as affirmative action threatened elite privileges, the rich let them go with less of a struggle because emigration to Europe or the US gave them other, attractive options. At the same time, though, Kapur says that members of the upper class that chose exit have still retained their voice: their continuing influence in Indian politics perpetuates social inequalities.

Tobias Pfitze (formerly one of our own at DRI) has also worked on this relatively neglected aspect of

the brain drain, studying Mexican immigrants to the US and their influence on politics back home. In local elections in 2000 to 2002, Pfitze found that places in Mexico that sent more immigrants to the US were more likely to vote to boot out the authoritarian Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which had dominated Mexican politics since 1929. His work suggests that the influence of Mexican immigrants to the US actually helped facilitate the Mexican transition from a one-party system to democracy.

[This article first appeared on [www.aidwatchers.org](http://www.aidwatchers.org) A project of New York University's Development Research Institute (DRI)]

## Nepal: Peace process delayed, says UN

The peace process is incomplete in Nepal nearly four years after the Maoist rebels signed a peace agreement with the government, ending a decade-long armed insurgency, says the UN.

“Too little attention has been paid to the peace process this year,” Karen Landgren, Special Representative to the UN Secretary-General in Nepal and head of the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), which is monitoring the 2006 peace accord, told IRIN.

A 1996 Maoist uprising to overthrow the monarchy displaced more than 100,000 people and killed thousands of others over the next decade.

While the peace process saw a lot of progress during the initial two years, progress has stalled on the two most contentious issues – the rehabilitation and reintegration of the Maoist army and dismantling and replacing a centuries-old feudalistic monarchy system.

There is a crucial need to adopt an action plan on integration and rehabilitation with a timetable and clear benchmarks, Landgren said, emphasizing the importance of detailed technical planning.

UNMIN is especially concerned since it has now only three months left to work in the country after having extended its mission seven times since its establishment in

2007 – most recently until next January.

Fragile but not dead

Local and international analysts said the UN concerns were justified, but that the situation was not deadlocked. “Of course the situation for [the] peace process is fragile but I don't agree that [it] is at a breaking point,” CK Lal, a local analyst, told IRIN.

Issues such as holding elections, electing an inclusive constituent assembly and bringing the Maoist rebels into mainstream politics have been major achievements thus far, said Lal.

The peace process remains incomplete but that does not imply that we are headed to any sort of failure...” said another independent analyst, Mohan Manandhar.

“Political parties still continue to engage in serious debates about the new structure of the state, such as whether the country needs a federalist system based on ethnicity or regional autonomy.”

“Many commentators warn of coming anarchy, the establishment fears a collapse of the social order and fragmentation of the nation. But



Maoist soldiers have been waiting since 2006 for their proper integration per the 2006 peace deal pic: Naresh Newar/IRIN

such fears are misguided,” states a recent report on Nepal by the global think-tank, International Crisis Group.

However, such optimism is not shared by the civilians outside the capital. “Citizens are increasingly disillusioned with the political process in Kathmandu,” said Sarah Levitt-Shore, country representative of the US-based research and advocacy NGO, Carter Center - Nepal, which is monitoring the implementation of the peace accord throughout the country.

Criticism of UNMIN

Lal told IRIN that fierce and widespread criticism of UNMIN was unjustified. “They have done a

reasonable job within their limited mandate,” he said, explaining that UNMIN was simply an observer and that the peace process should be Nepalese-led.

UNMIN must report back to the UN Secretary-General, who has been asked by the UN Security Council for updates on the peace process, by 15 October. “By then, Nepal [will have] entered its major holiday season [Dasain festival] and only three months will remain of UNMIN's mandate,” said Landgren.

She added that reintegrating the estimated 4,000 Maoist rebels still waiting in UN-monitored camps remained a “challenging task” for the parties to resolve by that deadline.

IRIN News

### Afghanistan:

(Pg36 cont...)

“Not all of the war victims come to us... only those who need artificial limbs and orthopedic care,” he said.

Polio, a contagious and paralyzing disease among children, is mainly endemic in the insecure southern and eastern provinces.

#### Drop in landmine victims

More than two decades of demining has resulted in a marked reduction in the number of landmine victims.

Casualties have dropped from over 2,100 (deaths and injuries) in 2002, to 508 in 2009, according to a new report by the Mine Action Coordination Center of Afghanistan (MACCA).

From March 2008 to March 2009, over 21,187 anti-personnel mines, 626 anti-tank mines and 456,365 explosive remnants of war (ERWs) were destroyed by demining agencies. However, over 6,700 hazardous

articles (landmines, ERWs) still remain in some 650sqkm, which deminers intend to clear by 2013, depending on funding.

MACCA's associate agencies do not destroy IEDs, which Taliban insurgents use widely to target Afghan and foreign forces but which often cause extensive casualties among civilians.

According to the UNAMA report, 374 civilians lost their lives in IED attacks between January and June 2010.

“Demining entities only clear mines and explosive remnants of war, which includes abandoned improvised devices outside conflict areas,” Mohammad Haider Reza, MACCA's director, told IRIN. “The good news is landmines harm fewer people than before. The bad news is IEDs and war kill and injure more people than before,” said one deminer who did not want to be named for security reasons.

IRIN News

# Rescue of Chilean miners - a unique human feat

by Raymond Rajabalan

Terrorist attacks, Air Crashes, oil spills, toxic leaks and earth quakes. The TV news diet is often dire rarely joyous. However October 13th was day of joy when a gripping story had a good ending.

A complex, against all-odds rescue of 33 miners trapped underground for more than two months gripped Chile and the world, with wild celebrations breaking out at its successful completion during the night of Oct 13th. Communication technology – including live video within the mine-turned the entire world into a global village hoping for the safe return of the men they did not know.

The ascent of the last of the miners, grizzled leader Luis Urzua, capped nearly 22 hours of euphoric scenes happening every



CHILEAN MINERS RESCUE

“I have been with God and with the devil, God Won. I seized the hand of God, it was the best hand. I always knew God would get us out of there.”

Mario Sepulveda – one of the rescued miners

30 to 40 minutes, when each of the trapped men was winched to the surface through a narrow escape shaft.

It also spelled the end of a record ordeal lived by the men, who had survived 10 nightmarish weeks in a dark tunnel 700 metres below the surface of Chile's northern Atacama Desert following an Aug. 5 cave-in.

“They were experiencing a kind of rebirth,” President Sebastian Pinera said in a TV address from the San Jose gold and copper mine after all the miners were freed.

“When the last miner exited the depths of the mine, I was moved as every Chilean was.” The rescue operation, Pinera affirmed, was “inspiring . . . for the whole world.”

Pinera, who had greeted almost all the miners personally, hailed Urzua for doing his duty and seeing off all his men before “leaving last like a ship's captain.”

The two, grateful miner Luis Urzua and the weary but smiling president Sebastian Pinera, led a rendition of Chile's national anthem that could be heard across the country.

Everywhere from the mine to the capital Santiago, tears glistened in eyes and on cheeks as the South American nation joined together in an unsurpassed moment of deep joy.

Car horns honked in cities and vuvuzela horns blared. Thirty-three balloons decked out in Chile's red-white-and-blue colours floated free into the night sky above the mine at the exact moment the last of the 33 trapped miners was brought to the surface.

Below, the depth of feeling welling forth electrified the thousands of international journalists covering the rescue, who respectfully stood in silence alongside the miners' families, recording the event, and sharing in it.

After initially being given up for dead in the days following the August 5 mine collapse by all except their families, their discovery alive on August 22 sparked riotous celebration — and also head scratching on how to get them out.

While three drills started boring escape shafts to them, sustenance and communications were dropped through probe holes to the men, who had up to then sur-

vived in a shelter with meagre rations.

Two of the drills veered off course, but the third completed its shaft last weekend, setting the scene for Wednesday's unprecedented extraction of the men.

The first out was 31-year-old Florencio Avalos, a fit and calm man who hugged his young son and wife and thanked Pinera and other officials.

Then, like a cannonball of energy out of the shaft, came Mario Sepulveda, 40, who roared “Viva Chile” before handing out rocks from the bottom of the mine as gifts.

“I have been with God and with the devil,” Sepulveda said later, in a more reflective mood. “I seized the hand of God, it was the best hand. I always knew God would get us out of there.”

Others following included the only non-Chilean in the group, Bolivian miner Carlos Mamani, 23, who turned down an offer from visiting Bolivian President Evo Morales to return to La Paz with him, preferring to remain in Chile.

Another miner, Mario Gomez, the oldest at 63, said on his escape: “I have changed, I am a different man.”

### The Magic of 33

The number 33 has now been etched in the lives of the Chilean miners

Minutes after the first of 33 miners reached the surface, euphoric Chilean President Sebastian Pinera noted the “magic number 33”. It was a reference to how it took 33 days to dig the shaft to rescue the miners trapped in San Jose mine and how they reached the surface



alive are slim.

• August 22: A drill probe reaches the miners and they attach a note to it saying: “All 33 of us are well inside the shelter.” The first video footage shows the miners waving their arms and apparently in good condition.

• August 23: The trapped miners beg to be rescued soon and receive first supplies via a pipeline.

• August 25: Chilean officials tell the miners it could be months before they are rescued. They exchange their first letters with their families.

• August 26: A Chilean judge orders 1.8 million dollars to be frozen from the accounts of the mine in order to pay future compensation claims.

• August 29: The miners move camp to a drier, cooler site deeper inside the mine. They also speak for the first time with their loved ones by radio-telephone.



Oct.13, 2010 – a date, which when expressed as 13-10-10, also happens to add up to 33.

The miracle of their survival was confirmed when news that the miners were alive reached the world Aug.22. The prophetic number “33” became truly revealing when it was realized that Aug.22 was in fact a day in week of 33 of this year's calendar

### A chronology of the disaster and rescue operation

• August 5: A mine shaft caves-in at a depth of 300 meters (984 feet) in the San Jose mine, 500 miles (800 kilometers) north of Santiago.

• August 6: Chilean President Sebastian Pinera says his government will do “everything humanly possible” to rescue 33 missing miners.

• August 7: New cave-ins complicate attempts for a direct rescue through a ventilation duct.

• August 12: Mining Minister Laurence Golborne says the chances of finding the miners

• August 30: Rescuers start drilling a first 30-centimeter (12-inch) pilot hole, aiming for the shelter.

• September 4: The miners hold a first videoconference with their families.

• September 18: A second drill reaches the level of the miners, but its 630-meter (2,070-foot) deep hole must now be widened.

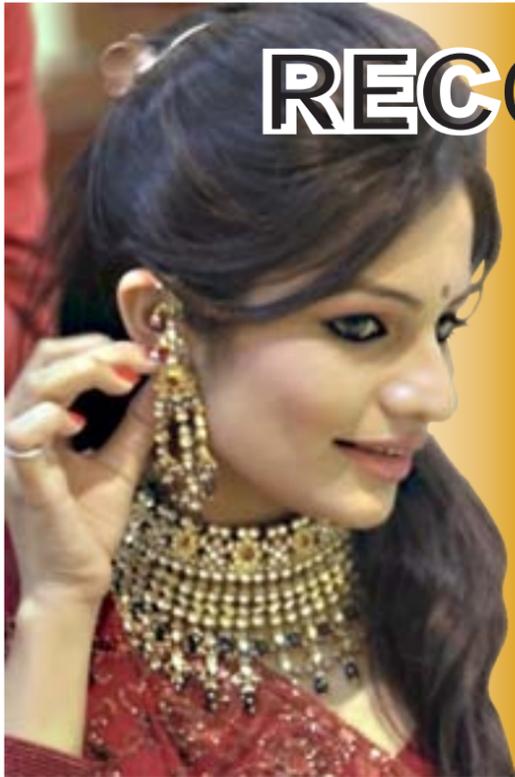
• September 19: A third, more powerful drill starts work on another shaft.

• September 30: Families of 29 of the 33 workers file suit against their employer, seeking 12 million dollars in damages.

• October 9: The main rescue shaft breaks through to where the miners are trapped.

• October 12: Some 69 days after their ordeal began, the first miner, Florencio Avalos, is pulled to the surface in a specially designed steel cage winched up through the rescue shaft.

• October 13: The rescue mission is completed with all 33 miners pulled out safely.



# RECORD HIGH GOLD PRICES

## DO NOT IMPACT CONSUMPTION IN INDIA

by 25 percent since he bought gold jewelry for his daughter's wedding last year, but he says he has no choice except to buy another piece.

"For the first anniversary we have to give some gift to her," Garg said.

A centuries-old tradition of gifting gold at marriages and other occasions and buying it during festivals is keeping the gold market buoyant in India, although prices are hovering around \$1340 an ounce – an all-time high.

The economic recession and a drought had led to a sharp fall in demand, last year. But those memories have faded as the Indian economy grows briskly once again and good rains this monsoon season boost farm incomes.

### Wedding season, new designs

As the main festival and wedding season gets underway, jewelers are getting ready with new designs and attractive offers to lure customers.

Rajinder Bhola's jewelry shop at the Gold Souk is buzzing with customers. He says he sees fewer casual customers walk in to buy pieces of jewelry, probably due to the high

prices. But Bhola says demand for jewelry to be presented at weddings remains consistent. And, in a country where two-thirds of the billion-plus population is under 30, the number of marriages is on the rise.

"The growing population, and then the weddings, and then very basic needs like all women in India wear a chain, and ring and bangles, these are the primary things which people have to buy," said Bhola.

### Good investment

It is not just the cultural affinity with gold that continues to fuel demand.

In Mumbai, Associate Director at the World Gold Council in Mumbai, Keyur Shah, says the massive jump in prices in recent years has only reinforced the centuries-old belief that gold is a time-tested asset.

"Indian consumers are not afraid of the price level," Shah said. "In fact it reiterates their confidence if prices consistently go up in gold. They always feel they made a wise decision to buy gold say two years back and wish they had bought more."

Belief that gold is a good investment is also spurring the sales of gold coins and gold bars. And, it is not just prosperous, urban

centers where gold is selling. Demand is also high in rural areas where other investment options such as banks and stocks are limited. Rural areas account for nearly two-thirds of gold purchases in the country.

A report by the World Gold Council says India and China are set to be the driving force behind gold demand.

The World Gold Council's Shah says prosperity is driving demand in these countries.

"If you look at the retail demand globally, consumption in India and China is on the rise and it is mainly due to rising incomes of the middle class," he added.

That includes people like Somya Misra, who will be getting married in January. She is going around jewelry shops to decide what she would like to pick up. The bride-to-be is not worrying about prices, but what pieces she wants.

"If marriages are happening, people are buying gold, irrespective of price, so I think till the time marriages continue in the same spirit in India, the purchase of gold is going to be high," Misra said.

That is what jewelers across the country are hoping will happen, helping them pull in good profits.

[VOA News]

By Anjana Pasricha

Record high prices of gold have failed to dent its consumption in India – the world's largest market for the precious metal.

R.K. Garg, 50, and his wife are shopping for gold earrings at the Gold Souk Mall in Gurgaon, close to New Delhi. Prices are up

## Indian Companies Push into Africa

By Anjana Pasricha

Indian companies are investing billions of dollars in Africa to tap the potential of its growing market and increasing its footprint across the continent.

From Kenya in the east, to Zimbabwe in the south and Nigeria in the west, India's \$15 billion Essar group is investing in Africa in businesses ranging from power, steel and mining to telecommunications and construction.

A director at the Essar group, Firdhose Coovadia says when the company wanted to diversify, the growing opportunities in Africa provided the obvious answer. He says though the continent's 53 countries vary enormously, the macro trends are similar.

"You look at what the continent has to offer today in 2010, I think what you will find there is a resurgence of entrepreneurial spirit across the continent clearly," Coovadia said. "Secondly there is an increased willingness and openness to trade, openness to investment, and a commitment by the politicians and regulators that they is no turning back from a cycle of investing and development. This obviously for an investor is that inflection point, between where the continent was as a whole, and where it is likely to be."

In the last five years scores of Indian companies have bought or invested about \$16 billion in a range of businesses in Africa. Among them is Bharti Telecommunications whose \$9 billion deal to acquire mobile phone operations in 15 African countries this year is the biggest investment by an Indian company.

Others tapping Africa are involved in pharmaceuticals, automobiles, information technology, power, mining and consumer goods.

State-owned companies are also making large investments in oil and gas fields to meet the needs of energy-hungry India. Many investors view the resource-rich continent as the new frontier for global business. Home to a billion people, Africa's economy is growing by about four and a half per cent.

Debashish Mukherjee, with consultancy A.T. Kearney in

New Delhi says the continent has great potential.

"Africa is where India was a few decades back," Mukherjee said. "The per capita income in many of the African countries is growing, there has been investment in education in many of the Sub Saharan countries, so many of the forward-looking indices are right and I think many of the companies would like to capitalize on that with an early start."

Attracted by cheap labor and land cost, Indian companies are also moving into Africa for commercial farming. Only about 15 cent of the arable land in Africa is cultivated. And many countries, which are food-deficient despite having surplus land, are inviting foreign investors into the agricultural sector.

In India, where farming is dominated by small, family-run holdings, companies are attracted by the possibility of starting large-scale operations in Africa. Arun Agarwal heads the African committee at the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry in New Delhi.

"In India there is a problem of land. You cannot get big lands (land)," Agarwal said. "So Sudan, Ethiopia Tanzania Mozambique, Senegal, and many countries, they are offering big land on easy terms."

Indian businesses find it relatively easier to operate in Africa because ties with the region date back generations. Many Indians who migrated to Africa to build roads and railways in Britain's former colonies are settled in that continent.

Still many Indians find Africa a tough place to do business. Coovadia of the Essar group says the challenges in Africa are similar to those faced by investors in many developing countries.

"Bureaucracy is one issue, the complex politics, you need



CEO Manoj Kohli, from Indian telecommunication company Bharti Airtel speaks during a press conference in Lagos, Nigeria, 25 Oct. 2010

to understand and be sensitive to the politics and history of each country," Coovadia added. "Infrastructure is a critical one. You would expect e-mail and bandwidth to be good, simple infrastructure like that does not often work effectively, and then getting shipping and logistics done, port services done... a similar parallel to were India was a decade or two ago."

The thrust into Africa is backed by the government, which has pledged to increase investment and trade with the continent. But business analysts say that unlike China's push into Africa which is driven by its government, India's push into the continent is largely led by its private sector.

## Foreign Investors Pour Billions of Dollars into Indian Stocks

By Anjana Pasricha

India's stock markets have attracted a record flow of foreign investment in recent months. The magnet for investors is an economy that has recovered from the global financial crisis.

Two years ago, India's main stock index, the Sensex, lost more than one-half its value as the global financial downturn prompted foreign investors to pull nearly five billion dollars out of the country.

But the Sensex has gained nearly 20 percent this year and is trading close to the levels prior to the financial crisis.

Rajesh Jain, a stock market ana-

lyst in Mumbai, attributes this to the money being poured into Indian stocks once again by foreign investors, also known as FII's.

"The markets have been driven by one single big trigger which has been sustained FII buying, and we have seen that continue through all of three, almost four months. We have seen investments by FII's of all hues and colors," said Jain.

Foreign investors have put nearly \$25 billion into Indian stocks so far. That is nearly double the amount they invested in the same period last year.

Financial analysts say international investors are investing in emerging markets like India to

take advantage of higher growth and better financial returns compared to developed countries, which still face economic challenges.

India's economy is among the world's fastest growing, and has emerged virtually unscathed from the financial crisis. The government estimates that India's economy will grow by eight and one-half percent this year. The International Monetary Fund is even more optimistic. In a recent report, it said economic growth could reach nine percent in 2010 due to growing consumer demand.

The stock market rally is not just helping private sector companies. The Indian government announced recently that it raised about \$3.5 billion by selling a 10 percent stake in state-owned Coal India, the world's largest coal mining company.

However while stock markets have attracted record investment, direct investments by foreign investors in businesses and infrastructure projects have been more sluggish compared to last year.

[VOA News]



# Volunteerism in the Community is second nature to Sigogini Sivarajah

## A Role Model for Our Youth

Sigogini Sivarajah is a 12th grade student attending Pickering High School. She stands out as a role model when it comes to helping out her community, to the maximum of a student's capacity. To prove this, she has recently received two awards; one from the Town of Ajax, the Accessibility Award, and the Terry James Volunteer Award for health awareness, which was a scholarship. It is amazing to see her commitment and engagement in the community.

She has volunteered for many years, starting from a very young age. However, when the hours started to count, she had collected uncountable hours that add up to around 1200 hours. Sigogini always keeps herself busy with the community. Even during her summer, she had been a peer leader of the NOW (Newcomer Orientation Week) program, by CDCD (Community Development Council Durham). She spent two weeks of her summer helping teenaged immigrants do workshops to adjust to the Canadian school system. She was outstanding and received a lot of positive feedback from the students of what a difference she made in their lives. This program was first launched in Durham this year, and she helped make it a huge success. She received a leadership certificate and got certified as a NOW Peer Leader.

Sigogini has also spent her summer with the Durham Regional Police volunteering as a supervisor of the 2nd Jr. YIP Camp, where she performed from educating and entertaining all the 120 students. She has been volunteering at Rouge Valley Health Systems Ajax-Pickering in the Rehab department. She not only learns about the hospital environment, but she helps eliminate the barriers to people with disabilities. She frequently stocks the cart containing diapers, towels, gowns, blankets and by doing this she enables all the patients to grab any material they need regardless if they are in a wheelchair or not because otherwise, they cannot reach the top shelf and help themselves. Sigogini eliminates travelling disabilities by helping them into a wheelchair and escorting them to the dining room for supper. Through this, Sigogini ensures that the patients are included with the rest of the department by joining everyone else for supper in the dining room. Sigogini feeds many patients and by doing so, ensures

the inclusion of them. This enables them to eat solid food just like everyone else rather than being restricted to a liquid diet. Sigogini consistently provides a safe environment for the patients through sanitizing the railings, making beds, changing blankets, garbage bags and water. This teen takes the time out of her shift to spend with the patients and treats them as a family member. She reads to them or just has a talk with them as some patients do not receive visitors. While visiting with them, the patients forget that they even have a disability. Sigogini has volunteered at Providence Healthcare for 3 years and eliminated barriers for people with disabilities by doing similar activities.

She also volunteers with the Senior Associated students attending Pickering High School. At lunch time Sigogini meets and talks to them about their day. She helps them realize that they're not different. During this time she has become a genuine friend to all the students, gaining an entire fan club. The friendship and the respect she has given to the students are greatly appreciated by the staff, the students and their parents.

Sigogini has done performances at Yeehong Retirement home during the holidays. She included all the elderly by entertaining them and talking with them. She has received feedback such as that they forgot that they are in wheelchairs because by seeing her dance, they just felt the energy and music that it felt like they were dancing.

Since its inception the Pickering H.S. "After Hours Success Club" program has helped a number of students by providing tutoring twice weekly in a variety of subjects. Volunteer tutors such as Sigogini assist these students one-on-one. Sigogini herself has willingly given countless hours of her time to assist others who are in need. Her personal characteristics such as patience, communication, consideration and good judgment, along with her strong academic background have been great assets to her capabilities as a tutor and to this program. She attends each tutoring session without a fail and remains positive despite the sometimes unpredictable personalities of those with whom she was tutoring. She also volunteers with Scientists in School. Scientists in School is a more hands-on, visual and interactive



way to learn science. She has recently taught elementary students about simple machines. She ensured students to be included in lessons by giving them a clear understanding about simple machines which allowed them to excel better in school.

Sigogini has been an active member of the Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD). She has been youth leader for a couple of months and has represented TCASD at many community events. She has choreographed a 25 minute dance for our annual show. The dance was called Around the World. She incorporated 13 different cultures within her dance and took the initiative to learn them. By teaching such a diverse dance, she educated other youth about different cultures. The audience for our annual show is very diverse as well, so they felt included due to her dance and it was appreciated. Also, she choreographed and performed at the Gala where she helped raise \$5000 towards cancer patients. She performs for community events such as Canada Day (Ajax), Heritage Day (Pickering), The Tastes of Ajax and many more. By performing at community events, she promoted, educated, supported, and developed the preservation of our culture. She does not only perform, but she mentors our younger kids with reading, cleans our park (Bonita Park), participates at our booth at community events and much more. She is also a mentor for the Baha'i community. She educates kids aged 3-8 about the culture and basic life values and virtues that are not taught at school. She includes all kids in the understanding of respect and life which allows them to make the right choices in life.

She is a highly active student in her school. She is the president of the diversity club at her school called Target Unity and is currently working on the annual multicultural show called Celebration of

Cultures. She also started her own club to help newcomers succeed in secondary school. She is also currently volunteering with MP Mark Holland, Kinsmen Heritage Centre, Pickering High School, Marketing Team for 1999(Movie), Good Steth Walk-in Clinic and Human Rights Conference. Within the last year she has volunteered hundreds of hours at many places such as; Calvary International Mission Church, Westney Heights Baptist Church, Providence Healthcare, Yeehong Retirement Home, Winborne Retirement Home, The Youth Centre, and Pickering Museum Village.

Sigogini does not stand out as a leader in volunteer work only, she was also awarded with a leadership award amongst all her co-workers during her employment with the Durham Regional Police in the Youth In Policing program 2009. When she volunteered with Rouge Valley, they awarded her with a real gold badge and a precious Health pin from the province of Ontario.

She has been awarded as a leader and an outstanding volunteer from the Town of Ajax from the MPP as well. She has won many competitions both academically and extra-curricular. For example, this year her school participated in Envirothon (environmental competition which you study for and compete against schools) for the first time and I



was part of the team. We won the regional, went to the provincial competition (a week in Waterloo) and then won the Rookie Award (highest mark of all the new schools). TCASD has adopted a park called Bonita Park. She helps cleaning the park and volunteered with the Toronto Conservation for the Yellow Fish Program. She spent her time painting yellow fish on storm drains around the neighbourhood for people to remember not to pollute our water. She also handed out flyers regarding this issue. Sigogini is very enthusiastic about preserving our environment as well. In her extra-curricular, she won an essay competition amongst students of my age and was awarded from the MP as well. She has received many academic achievements. Sigogini is evidently very active in the community which led her to be a familiar face to everyone. She has been interviewed by Rogers TV plenty of times regarding her volunteer activities. She was on the show Daytime on Rogers TV because she was invited to talk about her volunteer activities which led her to receive the Terry James scholarship. Also, on TVI, she has been on a show called Cross Roads because she had been invited to talk about her job and give some advice to youth about staying active in the community.

Sigogini is a great role model and an unbelievable student because she has definitely helped and changed the lives of people. She loves to volunteer, be engaged with the community and is eager to volunteer at more places in the near future. It is obvious that she is a very balanced and organized person because evidently she is highly engaged with the community, along with maintaining her high grades in school. Her profile indicates that she is a well rounded person and sets a good example which everyone should follow.

### Ontario Sri Lankan Pensioners Association First Annual General Meeting Scarborough Civic Centre- Council Chambers

The First Annual General meeting of the Sri Lankan Pensioners Association will be held on November 20th, 2010 between 8:30am to 1:00pm at the Scarborough Civic Centre-Council Chambers.

The main agenda will be election of office bearers for the next term of office. The letters of invitation for the meeting along with the necessary documents are already posted to the members. Members are kindly advised to be present, and bring with them their membership cards/any identity. Should any further information required, please contact.

**Maya Kandiah, Hony Secretary - 416 291 6667**



# Saint André Bessette I

## a friend, a brother and a saint

Raymond Rajabalan

Brother Andre became the 11th Canadian saint last month, joining Marguerite Bourgeoys, founder of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Montreal in 1670, Marguerite d'Youville, founder of the Grey Nuns of Montreal in the 1740s, and eight Jesuit priests who were killed during the settlement of New France whom the Vatican considers to be martyrs.

Saint André Bessette (August 9, 1845 – January 6, 1937), born Alfred Bessette and since his canonization sometimes known as Saint André of Montreal, was a Holy Cross Brother and a significant figure of the Roman Catholic Church among French-Canadians, credited with thousands of reported miraculous healings.

He was declared venerable in 1978 and was beatified in 1982. Pope Benedict XVI approved sainthood for Blessed André on Friday, February 19, 2010, with the formal canonization taking place last month Sunday, October 17, 2010.

### Early life

Alfred Bessette was born in Mont-Saint-Grégoire, Quebec (then Canada East), a small town situated 40 kilometers south-east of Montreal. He was from a working class family; his father, Isaac Bessette, was a carpenter and lumberman and his mother, Clothilde Foisy Bessette, saw to the education of her ten children. In 1849, with employment scarce and his family living in poverty, Alfred's father decided to move to Farnham (in Quebec) where he hoped to earn a living as a lumberman. Tragically, he lost his life in an accident, crushed by a falling tree, when Alfred was only nine years old. His mother found herself widowed at the age of forty with ten children in her care. She died of tuberculosis within three years, and Alfred found himself orphaned at the age of twelve.

Later Brother André would say, "I rarely prayed for my mother, but I often prayed to her." He was sent to live with his mother's sister, Rosalie Nadeau, and her husband Timothée, who attempted to establish Alfred in various trades, but the boy's fragile health made sustained manual labor difficult. Since he obviously did not have a trade, Alfred began a thir-

teen-year odyssey wandering from job to job with few belongings and little education. He was barely able to write his name or to read his prayer book. At various times he worked as a tinsmith, blacksmith, baker, shoemaker and wagon driver

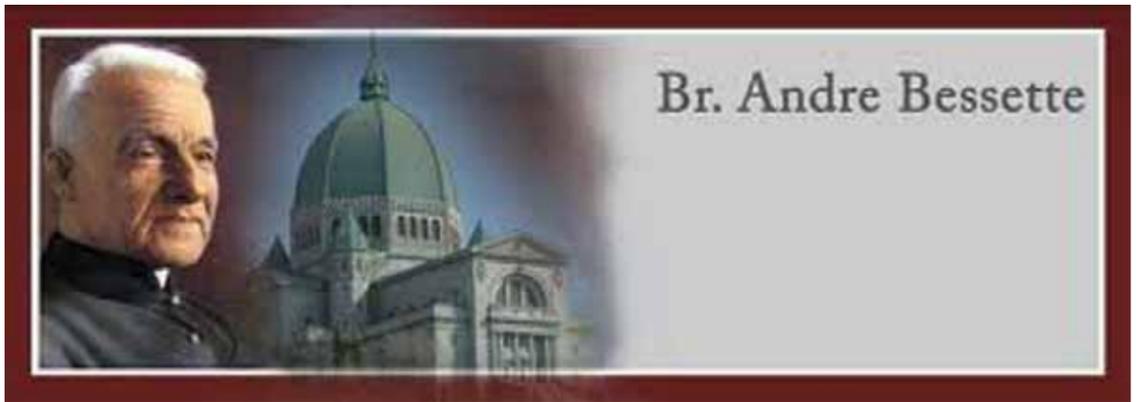
From his earliest days, Alfred exhibited an unusually intense spirituality. He would often spend his scant free time praying before a crucifix or evangelizing his friends, and his many self-imposed penances drew the admiring rebuke of his gentle aunt, who was concerned that the boy was endangering his already poor health

When he was 20 years old, Alfred joined many Canadians who were emigrating to the United States to work in a textile mill of New England, then operating at full output to supply the needs of the Union army in the American Civil War. Though his health was not robust, he worked doggedly. "Despite my limitations," he said, "There was no one who worked harder than me. When the Canadian federation was formed in 1867, he returned to his native country.

### Call to devotion

The Pastor of his parish, Fr. André Provençal, noticed the devotion and generosity of the young man. He decided to present Alfred to the Congregation of Holy Cross in Montreal, writing a note to the superior, "I'm sending you a saint." Although he was initially rejected by the order because of frail health, Archbishop Ignace Bourget of Montreal intervened on his behalf, and in 1872, Alfred was accepted, and entered the novitiate of the congregation, receiving the religious name of Brother André. He made his final vows on February 2, 1874, at the age of 28.

André was given the task of porter (doorman) at Notre Dame College in Côte-des-Neiges, Quebec. He fulfilled this function for some forty years while at the same time doing innumerable odd jobs for the community. At the end of his life, he would joke that when he came, he was shown the door, and stayed for forty years. In addition to his duties as receptionist, his tasks included washing floors and windows, cleaning



lamps, bringing in firewood and carrying messages.

His great confidence in Saint Joseph inspired him to recommend this saint's devotion to all those who were afflicted in various ways. On his many visits to the sick in their homes, he would recommend them in prayer to St. Joseph, and would anoint them lightly with oil from the lamp in the college chapel which always burned before the St. Joseph altar. People claimed that they had been cured through the prayers of the good Brother and Saint Joseph, and they were grateful their prayers had been heard. Brother André steadfastly refused to take any credit for these cures, and, although usually a gentle man, he was known to become enraged at those who suggested that he possessed any

healing powers. Because he wanted St. Joseph to be honored, in 1904 Bessette began the campaign to erect a chapel to honor the saint.

Brother André's reputation grew, and soon he was known as the miracle worker of Mount-Royal. He had to face the attacks and the criticism of numerous adversaries. He had the strong support, however, of the diocesan Church, and thousands of cures without apparent medical explanation made him the object of popular acclaim.

In 1924 construction of a basilica named Saint Joseph's Oratory, began on the side of the mountain, near Bessette's chapel.

### Death and path to canonization

Bessette died in 1937, at the age of 91. A million people filed

past his coffin.

The remains of Bessette lie in the church he helped build. His body lies in a tomb built below the Oratory's Main Chapel, except for his heart, which is preserved in a reliquary in the same Oratory.

Brother André was beatified by Pope John Paul II on May 23, 1982. The miracle cited in support of his beatification was the healing in 1958 of Giuseppe Carlo Audino, who suffered from cancer. He is commemorated by an optional memorial on January 6.

On December 19, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI promulgated a decree recognizing a second miracle at Blessed André's intercession. and on October 17, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI formally declared sainthood for Blessed Andre

## Roman Catholic saints of Canada

The following are the 11 Holy men and women of Canada, recognized by the Catholic Church until this day.

The Canadian Martyrs also known as the North American Martyrs were eight Jesuit missionaries from Sainte-Marie among the Hurons, who were martyred in the mid-17th century in Canada and upstate New York. They comprised the six Jesuits and two companions visioning to the Hurons during colonial days of New France. Their canonizations were for having been martyred for their faith. These holy men were canonized by Pope Pius XI on June 29, 1930. Their feast day is celebrated in Canada on September 26.

1. St. Jean de Brébeuf (1593–1649)
2. St. Noel Chabanel (1613–1649)
3. St. Anthony Daniel (1601–1648)
4. St. Charles Garnier (1605–1649)
5. St. Isaac Jogues (1602–1646)
6. St. Gabriel Lallemand (1610–1649)
7. St. René Goupil (1607–1642)
8. St. Jean de Lalande (1646–1646)

### Other Saints include:

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys (1620–1700) founded the Congregation of Notre Dame who are involved in providing Christian education to many parts of the world. She worked tirelessly to ensure the rights and welfare of women and children in New France and to ensure that young people received an education. Marguerite was canonized by Pope



ST. JOSEPHS ORATORY  
John Paul II on October 31, 1982; her feast day is celebrated in Canada on January 12.

Saint Marguerite d'Youville (1701–1771). This pious woman founded the religious congregation called the Sisters of Charity, known as the "Grey Nuns." Pope John Paul II canonized her in 1990. Her feast is celebrated on October 16.

Saint André Bessette (August 9, 1845 – January 6, 1937) was a Holy Cross Brother and a significant figure of the Roman Catholic Church among French-Canadians, credited with thousands of reported miraculous healings. He was canonised by Pope Benedict XVI on October 17, 2010. His feast day is January 6.

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# Youth talents in Cultural performances at "Vaani Vizha 2010"

Several youth mainly children from St. John's – Chundikuli Past Pupils Association members performed at the Vaani Vizha held on Saturday, Oct 9th at the auditorium of Senator O'Connor Collegiate to mark the celebration of Saraswathi Pooja. The Saraswathi Pooja celebration, an annual event hosted by St. Johns – Chundikuli Past Pupils Association in Toronto attracted many of its members, their children and friends. Free traditional food was served especially prepared by the committee members need special mention for their tireless, dedicated and committed volunteer services. **Seen here are some of the photographs taken at the event ►►**



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## RELIGIOUS SHRINES AROUND SRI LANKA NORTH, JAFFNA AND SOUTH, KATHIRGAMAM



*Vatharaja Perumal temple in Jaffna*



*Buddha shrine at Kathirgamam.*



*St. Martin's chapel, Jaffna.*



*Inside Nagapooshani Amman Kovil.*



*Interior of St. James church, Kayts.*



*Vaitheeswara kovil, Jaffna.*



*Main Kathirgamam Murugan shrine*



*Mosque in Kathirgamam.*



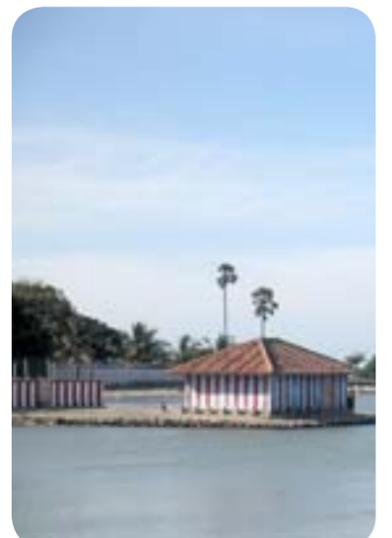
*Wagon-shrine, Vallipuram.*



*Ruined Hindu temple, dedicated to Murugan, in Kayts.*



*Sculpture of Ravana at Nagapooshani Amman Temple.*



*View out to sea from the Hindu temple jetty on Nainativu island.*

# OBITUARY



## KANAPATHIPILLAI SUBRAMANIAM

(9th October 2010)

The death is announced of **Kanapathipillai Subramaniam**, of Ambalavan Pokkanai in the Mullaitivu District and was temporarily residing in Murasumoddai. He is the beloved son of Late Kanapathipillai and Valliammai, son-in-law of Late Sellathurai and Valliamma, loving husband of Rajeswari, brother of Leelavathi and Sellasaraswathi, dearest father of Sukumar (Canada), Jasothea (France), Bavananthakumar (France), Thayanithy (France), Suthai (Sri Lanka), Jeyaselvi (Sri Lanka), Suganthini (Canada) and Suresh (Canada), loving Father-in-Law of Vasanthamala, Sellathambi, Anusuya, Rajendran, Jeyaseelan, Jeyaseelan (Teacher), Ananthan and Krishna. Doted grandfather of Raj, Prem, Saikanna, Senthoori, Julien, Mayura, Suyan, Thuva, Niloshan, Sophia, Ganendran, Saaruja, Sayaana, Gowthami, Abhinaya, Akshayan, Ashvin, Snehan, Anaya and Jaden.

His Last rites and cremation took place in Murasumoddai on Sunday 10th October 2010.

Friends and relations kindly accept this intimation.

Informants: Family Members

### Contacts:

**Sugu (Canada) - 416-534-0679**

**Jaso (France) - 33-6-906-1935**

**Kumar (France) - 33-4-512-9492**

**Thaya (France) - 33-7-865-5279**

**Sudha (Sri Lanka) - 77-545-2371**

**Selvi (Sri Lanka) - 77-202-0857**

**Suki (Canada) - 905-417-0016**

**Suresh (Canada) - 416-818-7444**



## LETTERS & OPINIONS

by Samy Appadurai.

The rising sun of Canada has been covered by the negativity of the voting results of the non permanent members of the security council of the United Nations Organization on 12th October 2010. Though Canada lost in the second round of the vote these are only passing clouds on Canada's raising sun. These clouds will not remain for long and we do not have to do much soul searching; rather we need to bear this in mind, the nations that wanted to vote for any nation that opposed Canada amounted to only a handful. We therefore must take a look at the global perspective surrounding this turn of events.

First of all the recent journey of Canadian foreign policy has not radically shifted to a new direction from its traditional path. Canada has continued to keep itself from being within the orbit of the American super power, though this was complained about by the opposition parties at the beginning of the first term of the right Honorable Stephen Harper. Mr. Harper has taken a very independent and unbiased stand in maintaining the neutrality of Canada in its foreign policy. But we also should not forget that Canada has long established economic, cultural, industrial, and technological ties that have never before existed except with France and Britain in the early period of Canadian history. It is unavoidable that we must have some sort of inclination towards the United States of America.

The Harper government extended an apology for the head tax that was levied on the Chinese who arrived in Canada as labourers in the late part of the 19th and early 20th centuries. But as a matter of principle, Mr. Harper decided not to visit China to attend the Olympics in Beijing. I believe some might think that it would have been better to compromise the principle with the intention of preserving economic interests, but Mr. Harper decided that it was better to abide by one's principles. Another example is that Mr. Harper decided to call back the Canadian soldiers after he made a state visit to the USA and met with President Obama. There is the possibility that he might have thought that Obama was exclusively concerned with implementing the economic protectionism policy that did not give any consideration for their long time partner and good neighbor

in the north. Alongside that concern, Canada did not allow the United States to use our air space for anti missile purposes. Maintaining an arm's length distance from the USA is not a new philosophy for Canada. Mr. Jean Chretien once said about the relationship between Canada and the United States in this way "Canada is your best friend, largest trading partner, and closest ally, but we are also an independent nation. Keeping some distance will be good for us..." This is what the current government is doing but in its own unique way.

Canadian foreign policy with Israel, Arab and other Islamic nations are cordial even though the reading from the political barometer might be giving off some variations. That being said Canada is not interested in surrendering to one side while totally ignoring the other. For example, when the Palestinians were attacked by the Israelis, the refugees of Palestine were welcomed with as much care as any other refugees. Canada has numerous refugees, skilled workers and their families from many of these countries and the government is very vigilant in terms of protecting their rights. Of course the public reactions at the time might have deviated from the policy of the government.

When it comes to national security and protection Canada has to take appropriate measures and this is unavoidable. It has been said that once Osama bin Laden mentioned that Canada has been the largest supplier of oil sand to the USA and therefore Canada is in a way allied with it. But we understand that this is business and furthermore, Canada has had some disputes with the USA over the Canadian waters in the north. Mr. Harper is firm in protecting Canada from Russia, the USA and other nations who have disputes with Canada. In spite of the Canadian position in the Middle East crisis and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan Canada has never participated or formed an alliance with the offensive forces. But just a few days before the election, the endorsement of Israel might have painted the picture with different colors. Out of 192 member nations in the United Nations, 57 of them are Arab and predominantly Islamic nations and they form quite a powerful block. The speculation of some might be that these nations wanted to "punish" Canada for its stance on the attack on the Turkish ship off the

# Defeat at the Security Council Election; a Blessing in Disguise for Canada



coast of Israel by the army; however this is not something that can be easily proved.

Let's move on to Africa where 51 votes were cast and let us read their heart beat. The Canadian government was not very much in favor of funding or donating money for the purpose of providing abortion services to victims of rape and sexual assault and it has been said that those victims number in the millions and their issues have to be addressed immediately rather than through religious edicts. Some of the richer nations including China have been shedding crocodile tears about the progress of African nations, but they do have a hidden agenda in exploiting valuable mineral resources, making investments with a high level of profit, and having potential markets established.

There has been a wrong notion about the Canadian stand on donations, aid, grants and loans to Africa by the members of the G20 nations. When the discussions on the aid for poor nations, particularly to Africa had taken place at the G20 summit, Canada was very sympathetic and generous in encouraging other rich nations to contribute more to those countries. But Canada was particular in saying that those assets should be beneficial to those people in the long run, not for the short term at the expense of the long term. So far this has been supported by the local opposition parties and a couple of the international countries. Quite a good number of leaders might have got the impression that Canada was somehow blocking certain loans and grants that would have been channeled by the rich nations and turned around to vote against Canada's position on the U.N Security Council.

But Canadians also have to consider the Somali Canadian's under aged children who were brain washed or taught and recruited for the purpose of the

civil war even without the knowledge of their parents. Most of the parents of these children came and claimed refugee status and chose this country as their new home. They have been treated like any other Canadians and the government is protecting them in accordance with the Canadian charter of rights and freedoms. Whether they like it or not it is the obligation of the government. I strongly feel that there is a miscommunication, a misunderstanding or lack of communication in this regard. Whatever has been said and done Africans should go back and look into the genuine contributions that have been made to them by various countries in the world and then they will be able to gauge the position of Canada in the future.

The decision to withdraw of our soldiers from Afghanistan unilaterally did not please the United States, Afghanistan and the NATO nations. I strongly believe that Canada has realized and carefully reviewed the situation of the war in Afghanistan and the commitments made by both NATO and the USA and decided to the time period for the withdrawal of its soldiers. President Obama himself planned to withdraw the men in uniform from Iraq and Afghanistan without considering the long term benefits and security of his nation and the sacrifices that were made by the soldiers from NATO, the USA and other nations. He should have realized that by unilaterally withdrawing from the war, this would certainly give additional strength and a morale boost and that would have a very positive impact to Al Qaida. In such a situation Canada has no other alternative other than to safe guard its own interests. This decision might have turned some of the nations to vote against Canada.

Some may say that Canada has failed to act seriously on the issues of global warming and climate change. What happened at the UN summit in Copenhagen?

Most of the world's nations spoke about plans and remedies loudly enough to reach the ozone layer. What happened later on? In terms of action, nothing was taken seriously; even the USA did not play a serious role in the summit. Rather it was said that the major contribution to climate change was mostly due to nature and that it had been going on for millions of years. The contribution by human beings, they stated, was limited. In my humble opinion, this was a polite way of saying that we do have other urgent and important issues to deal with and that global warming and climate change should not take up the entire agenda.

The European Union has grown multi dimensionally and has expanded its activities from economic cooperation to having common markets to common currency and has now entered into having a common immigration policy. Now it has come to play their cards with the understanding and support of their members without looking and comparing themselves with other competing nations. I should not over emphasize the current weaker economic conditions of Portugal with Canada, the role model economy among the rich nations however it is something to bear in mind in the context of the Security Council vote.

Canada mostly avoids getting involved in any kind of controversial global issues and extends its help without having any strings attached. Canada also has no ulterior motives unlike its former colonial rulers with their former colonies in their umbrella organizations. Canada has no intention of maneuvering or manipulating international issues for its own benefit. Canadian foreign policy from the beginning headed by Sir John A MacDonald to Mr. Harper, irrespective of the policies of the ruling parties is well balanced and has a wider and broader outlook.

Let's compare the capability and the strength of these three nations and objectively arrive at a good conclusion. During the pre industrial era, Spain and Portugal were in a weak economic position. Agriculture provided the main source of income and explorers financed by the ruling elites went around the world to explore new venues in order to expand business and ended up colonizing various countries almost five centuries ago and flourished as a result.

Contd. in next page...

# Durham Tamil Association awards University Scholarships at its 9th Annual Youth Festival

Durham Tamil Association's year long celebration of its 10th Anniversary's grand finale was its 9th Annual Youth Festival on Oct 2nd at J. Clarke Auditorium. Over 100 kids and youth participated with an amazing performance of Tamil classical musical

instruments, music, bharata natyam, comedy drama, tiny tots, and fashion show. Local MP's MPP's, Mayors, Councillors, Candidates from Ajax, Pickering, Whitby and Oshawa all extended their well wishes. TD Bank Port Union,

Ontario Power Generation, City of Pickering was recognised as Community partners of DTA.

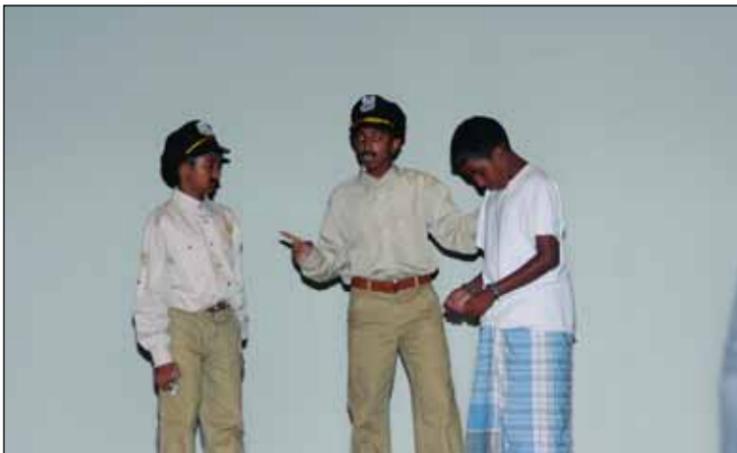
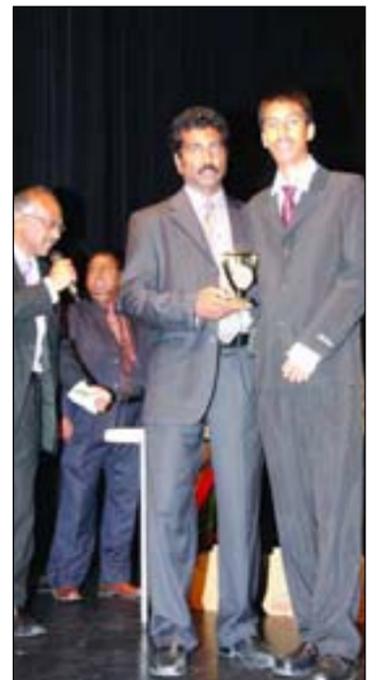
Congratulations to DTA's first annual \$1000 University Scholarship Award Recipients Prashanth Selvakumar and Prasaanth Ganesalingam. Durham

Tamil Association celebrated its youth festival showcasing that "Unity is Strength" and invites all Tamil

organisations to join hands and achieve more for all our youth and kids. [www.durham-tamils.com](http://www.durham-tamils.com)



Seen here are some pictures taken at the event.



## Defeat at the security ...

Contd. from page 48

The current economic situations of those nations along with Greece are struggling to maintain their economies and were recently on the verge of collapsing. The European Union and some other nations had given their hands and lifted them from the ditch. Furthermore Portugal is not a member of the G8 or G20, two of the most powerful organizations. With due respect, it would be much better if they would put their resources including their time, into bringing back the local economy rather than deviating into international affairs.

With the recent accomplishment of successfully hosting the International Winter Olympics

2010 in Vancouver, the G8 in Huntsville and the G20 in Toronto, the strength of this country has expanded. The caliber of operating these international events should have given Canada a rightful place at the Security Council. Canada's not being elected to the security council is not a great loss for Canada per se, rather the rest of the world is losing a valuable contribution from a dynamic nation.

Internally, the opposition parties should have forgotten their internal differences and rivalries and joined hands with the government to advocate and support Canada in a potential victory in this election. Let's be united and

portray the Canadian image around the globe, rather than considering the affairs that are exclusively the responsibly of the ruling party. If they would have played their role adequately enough, at least our image would have been more impressive. In closing, this defeat at the Security Council shall pass, but the effects of leaving Canada out will be felt, not just by the international community but within Canada as well. That being said, this is Canada, we will survive!

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



## FREE TAMIL CLASSES

Conducted by Durham Tamil Association  
Every Friday evenings 6.30-8.30PM and Sunday Mornings 9.30AM-11.30AM at Pickering Recreation Complex, 1867 Valley Farm Road (South of Hwy 2/Kingston Rd). Pickering.

More info 905.428.7007

[info@durhamtamils.com](mailto:info@durhamtamils.com)



# Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham host programs for Youths successfully

## TCASD Soccer Team Saraswathy Pooja

Active playtime is essential for all parts of human development. By fostering a constructive view of exercise and health maintenance during childhood, there is a greater chance that they will maintain these healthy habits into adulthood. Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham continues engaging children and youth in physical activity for physical wellness, and to build their self esteem. This is the 2nd year

for outdoor soccer for TCASD Panthers Soccer team. The season started in June and finished in the end of September. There were more than forty children that joined the team some belonged to the junior and others on the senior team. The season ended with the friendly game with the Markham team. It was amazing to see the growth of soccer skills in all the children and their team spirit, every child was eager to

attend the practices. Special thanks to the manager of the team Mr. Maniam and the coaches Mr. Mahadaya Tharmaratnam and Mr. Sutha Arumugam and all the parents who assisted in coaching. TCASD would also like to thank all the parents who have continued to show their support to our community most importantly bringing their children.

On Saturday October 9, Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) celebrated Saraswathy Pooja. This is a festival celebrated by the children and youth, particularly students who invoke the blessings of the goddess for success in learning, arts and crafts. Saraswati is the goddess of knowledge and art and represents the free flow of wisdom and consciousness. This celebration was part of TCASD's cultural celebration to educate the children and the youth about val-

ues of the Tamil Culture. TCASD members gathered together to celebrate this vibrant occasion. All youth and children sang prayers and lit lamp that were used during the Arati and passed around for each devotee to warm their hand and touch their heads. The youth offered flowers to Sarawathi. All members brought their festival specialities and shared it with each other. It was an evening of purity and gaiety. Thank you to all the parents, children and youth for attending this peaceful event.



Friendly game with the Markham Team



Youth and children singing the prayers



TCASD Senior Team



Adult Members doing Arathi



Taneka and Gayathri doing a speech on Saraswathy Pooja



Youth, Aparna Tharmakulasingam performing a Saraswathy Dance



TCASD Junior Team

### Main Up Coming Events

November 2010

Indoor soccer (all ages),  
For more info call 416-727-5052

Ajax Santa Clause Parade

To join us in the parade please call 416-857-0846

Preparations for external competitions (English)  
Academic Awards and Volunteer Appreciation Night

December 2010

Annual Children and Adult Holiday Dinner  
Make a Child Smile Project

# Remembering a Scholar - S. Velauthapillai

By S. Ratnaprasadam

Tamil Scholar S. Velauthapillai was born on 25th September 1923 in a Hindu family at Thillaiyaarli, Kokuvil, Jaffna. Sellathurai was his father and Thangammah was his mother. Velauthapillai was the third child in a family of four children; Kanthaswamy and Annapooranam were senior to him whilst Packialadchumy was the youngest child. He had his earlier education Wesleyan Mission Tamil mixed school and later at Churriya Street Bilingual School located at Perumal kovilady in the Jaffna town. He acquired a very good grounding in Tamil language under the renowned grammarian Vidvan N. Suppiah Pillai.

He recalled that "his teacher was a short, lean person with the hair tied in a knot in the head (like Brahmins) and the forepart shaved clean. Holy ash in three stripes flashed in his fore-head."

Velauthapillai studied upto Grade 6 in this school and at the tender age he was ignorant of the rendition of his great teacher who later went to Head the Naval Vidyalayam at Vannarpannai. Suppiah Pillai had written commentaries for many books and was a recipient of the Sathiya Mandalaya Award.

Velauthapillai joined Jaffna Hindu College in 1940 in JSC (Junior School Certificate) class. From then on through London matriculation and University entrance classes he learnt English language and literature under V. Nagalingam, popular for his excellent rendering of Shakespeare's plays who was also a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi. Velauthapillai's father wanted his son to join Govt. Clerical Service. But Nagalingam interviewed and streak of good luck gave him a chance to go to the University and learn under Swamy Vipulananda. Until the 1940s there was only one University of Ceylon, which Mr. Velauthapillai joined in 1944. Swamy Vipulananda was first Tamil Professor and he came under Swamy's spell in the last three years (1944 to 1947) of Swamy's Life.

At Jaffna Hindu College (1940 to 1943) Velauthapillai contributed Tamil poems to the college magazine regularly. In the pre-matriculation class in 1941, C. Subramaniam (Orator) read in class the Tamil adaptation of Wordsworth's poem "We are Seven". The Tamil version was



25th September 1923 - 23rd August 1996

from the pen of Kingsbury Thamoatham who was the Reader in Tamil at the University College. On Subramaniam's suggestion Velauthapillai composed a poem in Tamil based on the English poem "The Pet Lamb". His adaptation was so excellent that Pandit K. K. Nadarajan praised the student's talents. Orator included that poem in the Jaffna Hindu College Annual and made reference to it in the "Morning assembly" when Mr. Velauthapillai was given a big ovation. That was his boyhood masterpiece. Over the years his talents blossomed into fine literary work with a philosophic and religious twist. Mr. Velauthapillai's composition was in simple language with a choice of words not difficult to comprehend. They were distinctly different to those of Tamil poets who Pandithamani K. Kanapathipillai's view on "Poets"

Velauthapillai held the same view and he never employed the figure of speech "Yamahum" as worth while contribution to Tamil literature, especially religious works. When Principal Nagalingam died in September 1948, C. K. Kanthaswamy the acting Principal got Velauthapillai to compose an elegy on the departed Principal. His few verses in Tamil, which were distinctly different from the traditional kalveddu style, were so heart-rending and moving that captivated the minds of all present at the anthing. In that homage to his Guru he admitted having allowed his own

feelings to flow into the composition remembering the Biblical line "In the midst of Life we are in Depth". Velauthapillai had the good fortune of associating closely with S. Handy Perinbanayagam when he became Principal of Kokuvil Hindu College in 1949. Having evaluated the teaching talents, the new Principal appointed Velauthapillai as the Head of Tamil Faculty in the School, as a teacher in one of his classes a Christian child complained of harassing by her Hindu classmates when thy neighbour as thyself.

To his surprise, this was deemed as Christian propaganda by Biblical line "neither cast ye, your pearls before swine".

The 1952 issue of "Kokuvil", the college magazine carried a poem, "KUYIL" from Velauthapillai, which won the admiration of K.S. Arulmathy, the acting Director of Education and Senior Lecturer in Tamil Dept. of the University of Ceylon.

Velauthapillai abandoned teaching in August 1953 and took up an appointment in the Official Languages Dept. in Colombo. Handy Perinbanayagam, while reluctantly accepting Velauthapillai's resignation prophetically remarked "You are quitting teaching in preference to a Government job. If you expect promotion there, you will have to be the son of a Minister or the sin of a minister." Later in life Velauthapillai realized the truth of this remark when numerous obstacles

prevented his emerging forward. He was a silent worker and made valuable contributions to the Department. He became the Chief Education Officer of the Curriculum Department Centre in Colombo.

The romance that developed between Nesamalar and Velauthapillai during their University days culminated in their marriage in 1955 despite many set backs. It was a quite wedding in Colombo and S. Handy Perinbanayagam blessed the couple. They led a happy life and had five children. Sivapalan (MD, USA), Nandapalan (MD, UK), Manjula (MD, Canada), Sivakumar (Accountant, New Brunswick) and Nandakumar, who passed away when he was eleven years old. The loss of their youngest son was a great blow to the family. All other four children are married and happily settled in life. Mrs. Nesamalar Velauthapillai was herself a graduate teacher and an accomplished lady. She served in various schools and finally at St. Catherines College, Kotenhena, Colombo. She was a good after-dinner speaker. Despite ill-health in later she led a committed and devoted life to the family.

Velauthapillai lost his mother when he was very young. His brother Kanthaswamy in the 1970s; sister Annapooranam died in 1947; the father died in 1980 and Packialadchumy, the other sister died in April 1996. She was widowed early with nine children and Velauthapillai relieved her substantially of this burden. His nieces and nephews are well settled in life. They are deeply grateful to him and loved him dearly. His elegy to sister Packialadchumy was written in Tamil.

Whilst serving as Translator for the Information Dept., Velauthapillai edited the monthly journal "Sri Lanka" which carried his review of the book "NAMBIYA-HAVAL". (a Tamil translation of Bagwathi Giri-Sanskrit) authored by Sivam Karunalaya Pandyanar. Its style of composition in Sangam Literature tradition and diction and deep knowledge of the author greatly impressed the reviewer. Later with an introduction to Pulavar Pandyanar by Mrs. Maheswary Balakrishnan Velauthapillai got to know Pandyanar closely when he expressed his appreciation of the investigative and research approach in the review. For 20



years, from 1956 to 1976 intermittently Velauthapillai studied Tholkapiam, Silapathikaram, and Sivagnapadiam under Pulavar Pandyanar and drew on the revered teacher's wide knowledge of Tamil grammar and Literature Saiva Siddhartha and Vedanta. Pandyanar had phenomenal memory. He was a walking encyclopedia. He was a Mathurai Pandit and Pulavar from Tamil Nadu, India. He was brought to Colombo to give private tuition to the son of a rich merchant. The student later became a Professor of the Annamalai University. At the felicitation function of the farewell in Colombo in May 1971, Pandyanar expressed his deep appreciation of the farewell song in ten verses composed by Velauthapillai and called him "Thamil Pulavan". It was a "Perfect at Piece" remarked the teacher to the organizers. Pandyanar continued to live in Sri Lanka (Ratmalana) and passed away shortly afterwards.

Velauthapillai's translation of the voluminous English history book "The Wonder that was India" by A. L. Bashaw was his master-piece. He was commended by many on his excellent production. Translating from English to Tamil is a challenging experience. It has to be absolutely accurate and it should reflect the author's inspiration and create a parallel work. The new creation must be inspired by a special canon of aesthetic art, able to stand by itself alone and well balanced in all its parts. That, all these aspects were incorporated in Velauthapillai's translation is worthy of praise.

Velauthapillai helped the Colombo Old Students Association of K.H.C with a farewell song for S. Handy Perinbanayagam when he retired as Principal in 1960. Again when he died in December 1977 Velauthapillai's elegy on Handy put his past pupils into ecstasies. His farewell song to Principal C. K. Kanthaswamy when he retired in 1971 was equally touching.

In August 1976 Velauthapillai underwent surgery on his head to remove pituitary tumor that partially blinded his left eye. As one of the pituitary lobes had got severed he had to suffer hormone imbalance for the rest of his life. He recalled later that an astrologer had predicted this malaise from the planetary position in his birth chart, when he was a young student.

Contd. in page 53...



## MONSOON FEATURE

It has been truly said about Diwali that this is the festival of lights that illuminates the darkness of the New Year's moon, and strengthens our close friendships and relationship, with a self-realization!

In India and the world over, Diwali is celebrated on Amavasya - the 15th day of the dark fortnight of the Hindu month of Ashwin, (October/November) every year. It symbolizes that age-old culture of India which teaches us to vanquish ignorance, drive away darkness and enlighten our inner selves with the light of knowledge. Even to-day in this modern world Diwali projects the rich and glorious past of India.

Every year on the dark nights of Diwali homes are decorated, sweets are distributed by everyone and thousands of lamps are lit to create a world of fantasy. Of all the festivals celebrated in India, Diwali is considered to be the most glamorous and significant. This festival is enthusiastically enjoyed by people of every religion, its magical touch creates an atmosphere of joy and festivity.

There are many stories of how Diwali evolved into such a widely celebrated festival is different in various regions and states of India. In the north, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar and the surrounding areas, Diwali is the day when King Rama's coronation was celebrated in Ayodhya after his victory over Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. Both the royal families, Ayodhya and Mithila, the kingdom of which Sita was princess, the cities these kingdoms were lit up with lamps, glittering on dark nights to welcome home the divine king Rama and his queen Sita after 14 years of exile. In southern India, the story talks of the Goddess Durga's triumph over the evil demon Narakasura. This triumph of good over evil brought back the light of knowledge and truth to mankind.

On the day of Diwali festival Rangolis are drawn with different colored powders to welcome guests. Oil diyas are arranged in and around the house. Because of these flickering lamps, the festival has acquired its name: Dipawali or Diwali meaning 'a rows of lamps'. On this day, people buy something for the house or some jewelry for the women of the house. It is auspicious to be buy something metallic, such as silver. Mostly silver coins are purchased on this day.

On Diwali, people exchange sweets, wear new clothes and

# Diwali – A Festival of Warming up Relations

## RELATIONS - 4

buy jewelry. Families exchange gifts, sweets and clothes. All young and old, men and women and kids hug each other, wish a prosperous new year and celebrate the festival with joy and festivity. Although Diwali has become commercialized as the biggest annual consumer spree because every family shops for sweets, gifts and fireworks yet the burning diyas help keep the relations warmed up for the times to come.

Diwali in Sanskrit means is a row of the lamps'. The most popular tradition of Diwali is filling little clay lamps with oil and wick and lighting them in rows all over the house. Diwali has many legends and religious accounts associated with it. Lights and diyas are lit to drive away the darkness and ignorance and awakening of the light within ourselves. It is the perfect time for family gatherings, foods, celebrations and pooja. Goddess Laxmi plays a major role in this festival.

Most people renovate and decorate their houses and business places. Entrances are made colorful with lovely Rangoli designs to welcome Laxmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity. To indicate her long awaited arrival, small footprints are drawn with rice flour and vermilion powder (kumkum) all over the houses. Lamps are kept burning all through the night.

Usually for diwali puja we need silver and gold coins, suparis, uncooked Rice, paan leaves, kumkum for applying tilak, mithai (Indian sweets), camphor, agarbattis (incense sticks), dry fruit (almonds, cashews), flower petals and Lakshmi-Ganesh icon. The pooja ritual is performed in the evening at the suggested time by the priests. Tiny diyas of clay are lit to drive away the shadows of evil spirits. Bhajans are sung in praise of the goddess and sweets are offered to her. Diwali puja consists of a combined pooja of five deities: Ganesha is worshipped at the beginning of every auspicious act as Vighnaharta; Goddess Lakshmi is worshipped in her three forms Mahalakshmi, the goddess of wealth and money, Mahasaraswati, the goddess of books and learning and Mahakali.

The Diwali illuminations with lighted diyas bring supernatural brightness and joy with the hope of finding light in darkness. Light is significant in Hinduism because it signifies goodness. So, during the Festival of Lights, 'deeps', or oil lamps, are burned to ward off darkness and evil.

Diwali is associated with lights, sweets, and liveliness. On Amavasya night, lights and fire-

works have a significant role to play in this festival. This is why, when we hear the name Diwali, the first impression that flashes through our minds is of multicolored fireworks, sprinkling various sorts of bright colored lights in the sky. Although the tradition of fireworks on Diwali is not very old, still they have succeeded in becoming such a vital part of this festival that we can't even imagine Diwali without them.

The Depawali or Diwali festival also marks the beginning of the new year according to the Hindu calendar, as the Ashwin month ends and the Kartik month begins on this day. Besides the contemporary led-lights, candles, and fireworks, people also use the conventional earthen-lamps (diyas) for embellishing their homes.

Diwali is really a fabulous festival and fireworks play a significant role in increasing its charm among all age-groups. Whether they are kids, youngsters, or older people, everybody enjoy the fireworks like twinkling Anars, furious

Rockets, vibrant Sparklers, cyclonic Ground Discs, and so.

However, there are some environmental issues associated with the use of firecrackers or fireworks on the Diwali festival, still there will be no exaggeration in saying that fireworks are an inherent part of Diwali celebrations. A few other evils are now attached with this festival. People indulge in gambling, alcohol, and even prostitution on this auspicious day. Everyone has to come forward to help eradicate such vices attached to this pious festival and make it a festival that warms up relations.

May this Diwali and New Year bring you happiness in your life with your husband/wife. If you do not have one, next year, we wish you must celebrate this festival with your life partner. If you are looking for one, contact us.

**Prof. Saran Ghai**

If you or anyone you know is in the marriageable age 18 plus, and needs help in finding a suitable life partner, contact me. Similarly, if you or anyone known



**By Prof. Saran Ghai**

to you is of older age, I mean within approx 45-65 years age group, is alone and is looking for a suitable life partner should contact me. I would like to say to the older age people living alone, "Why should you live alone when there is someone who is still waiting for you and is ready to say, "I love you", I care about you. Will you marry me?"

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# South Asian Think Tanks Receive Rare Boost: Long-term Core Funding

The Think Tank Initiative (TTI), a partnership of major donors, has awarded 21 Million USD in grants to 16 independent policy research institutions in South Asia. The long-term funding will help strengthen the think tanks' role as influential players in national policymaking in the region. According to Hon. Minister Prithviraj Chavan, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology, this kind of support is long overdue in India.



"While a lot of exciting things are happening with science and technology in India, almost nothing is happening in social science research and the creation of more high quality policy research organizations," said the Minister. "So I must compliment the Think Tank Initiative for selecting these sixteen organizations and (helping) to increase their ability to

deliver."

The Minister was speaking at a panel discussion held to mark the launch of the Think Tank Initiative in South Asia. The event took place on Saturday, October 30 at the Shangri-La Hotel in New Delhi.

The Think Tank Initiative is a multi-donor program dedicated to

strengthening independent policy research institutions in the developing world. Managed by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), it is a partnership between IDRC, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the UK Department for International

Development and the Netherlands Directorate General for International Cooperation. The Initiative supports 52 think tanks in 23 countries in South Asia, Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa with a total investment of \$65 Million USD.

The 16 institutions that were announced on Saturday, Oct 30th are:

Bangladesh: Institute of Governance Studies (IGS), Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)

Nepal: Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-Nepal (ISET-N)

India: Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS), Public Affairs Centre (PAC), Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS), National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Centre for Policy Research (CPR), Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Centre for the Study of Developing Societies



Pakistan: Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC), Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

Sri Lanka: Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA).

For more information about the Think Tank Initiative, visit [www.idrc.ca/thinktank](http://www.idrc.ca/thinktank)

About IDRC

Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is one of the world's leading institutions in the generation and application of new knowledge to meet the challenges of international development. For nearly 40 years, IDRC has worked in close collaboration with researchers from the developing world to build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies. [www.idrc.ca](http://www.idrc.ca)

## Sri Lanka may need tighter monetary policy - IMF

Sri Lanka's monetary policy may need to be tightened if credit growth picks up quickly in the next few months and rapid import growth might require more exchange rate flexibility, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said.

Reuters News Agency reported the findings of an IMF staff mission report released during weekend of Oct 30th, 2010 as follows:

According to the IMF, Sri Lanka's promised fiscal and tax reforms under a \$2.6 billion loan programme must be translated into reality if it hopes to make sustainable changes.

"The government's statement of intent is encouraging, but there can be no guarantee that the reforms will ultimately be implemented as currently intended," the IMF said in the report.

Robust credit and import growth have started to raise concerns in the market that Sri Lanka's inflation could be headed higher, a worry the central bank has said is overblown.

The central bank may find "a need to tighten its stance if credit picks up sharply in the coming months and the exchange rate will need to show more flexibility if rapid growth of imports begins putting pressure on the balance of payments," the IMF report says.

The central bank has kept policy rates at multi-year lows to try and spark credit growth which

had not taken off despite a surge of economic optimism after the end of a quarter-century civil war in May 2009.

It has now started growing, but inflation spiked to a 13-month high of 6.6 percent in October, which was well above expectations. The central bank has forecast inflation of 6 percent by the end of the year, and 4-6 percent in 2011.

The central bank keeps the rupee exchange rate from moving too quickly by setting a trading band through two state banks. It says it has prevented the rupee from appreciating because some foreign exchange inflows are "a little hot".

The world lender also cheered tax reforms, including the cutting of massive import duties that helped increase revenues and contributed to consumer demand growth. Boosting revenue is a big plank of Sri Lanka's plan to trim its perennial budget gap.

"Further steps are needed however to put in place legislative changes to permanently reform tax concessions under the new regime, and to simplify and broaden the bases for the VAT and income taxes," the report says.

The IMF wants Sri Lanka to move tax holidays given under the current board of investment scheme, which put them in place during the war to help keep growth moving along.

## S. Velauthapillai

- Contd. from page 51

As early as 1948 I had a great admiration for Velauthapillai's unique style of composing Tamil poems. He helped us reprint the priceless literary treasures left behind by Sabaratna Mudaliyar, that illustrious son of Kokuvil. He admired their worth and the author's talents. Another famous poet was Silambanathapillai, also from Kokuvil and Velauthapillai was associated in reprinting with explanatory notes his treatise on "Vinayagar" in 100 verses, I must also record my deep debt of gratitude to Velauthapillai for the numerous devotional hymns or Lord Murugan and their deities presiding in the family temple at Kokuvil. They have all been printed in an Anthology in two parts - Part I (1990) Part II (1992) and earlier in 1984.

He handles a variety of Tamil poetic metres and rhythm with ease assurance and his inspired outpourings evoke great devotion. So beautiful and appealing to both the head and the heart are the ideas and the form of language used to give expression to them that the recital and contemplation of some of these verses in times of adversity would be a real source of comfort and solace to the afflicted. Some of them embody the essence of Saiva Religion and Siddhartha philosophy. The author's explanatory notes on all his compositions facilitate easy comprehension. Pulavar Keeran, the renowned scholar from Tamil Nadu was so impressed with Velauthapillai's work that, while giving us his

preface to "PATHITTUP-PATHANTHATHI", lamented that such talented men had emigrated from Sri Lanka.

Velauthapillai's composition "Venugopalar Orupa Orupathu" has turned out to be a classic piece of Literature. It has richness of philosophical thought. Krishnan was a historic person, who played a key role in Mahabharata; he was son of Devaki; He was disciple of Ghora Ankirasa; He had been initiated into final meditation or Siva (Sivahambhavana) by Sage Upamanju - these are little known facts to most Hindus. In portraying the character of Lord Krishna, he had maintained the best traditions of Tamil literature. Krishna has been painted as a noble, valourous and lovable character with Divine qualities who became a Jivan Mukta before casting off his mortal frame on earth. Velauthapillai loved Siddhartha and Mei Kandar's interpretation of advaita. He saw Vishnu in Siva and Siva in Vishnu. There is only one God for all in spite of the differences in nomenclature and Theology. Veluthapillai emphatically declared that Swami Vipulananda and Pulavar Sivam Karunalaya Pandyanar were responsible for his achievements.

In 1980 the Government expanded its Free Education Scheme to cover issue of free books to school children in Sri Lanka. Production of books was undertaken by the Educational Publications Department, headed by H. R. Chandrasekara as Director. Velauthapillai was select-

ed to serve in the Editorial Board as he was equally proficient in English, Tamil and Sanskrit. The Tamil division was headed by V. Vallipuram and Velauthapillai's contribution in this field was immense. He also headed the Curriculum Dept. He served as Assistant Commissioner for Examinations for a few years and retired in 1983. In May of the same year he edited our "Ther Thirupani Malar" whose contents were commended by many learned people.

In retirement he lived a secluded life and immigrated to Canada to be with his only daughter. From Canada he obliged us with explanatory notes on "Vinayagar Kavasam" in 1991 and in April 1996 he sent us comprehensive explanatory notes on "Siva Kavasam", but did not live to see it in print as he passes away on 23rd August 1996. Death is man's lurking and inescapable foe.

In a land where prophets go largely unhonoured and fakes and mediocrities are replacing men of talent. Professor Kailasapathy, admiring Velauthapillai's talents, prevailed on him to publish a volume of his writings in prose and verse, which he did not do.

To compensate this lapse his wife Nesamalar (nee Parampalam) Velauthapillai published "Eelathu Severl Padaiyalkal" in Toronto, Canada in the year 1998. She herself passed away shortly afterwards.



By Lee Kuan Yew

Ancient peoples developed and ritualised mourning practices to express the shared grief of family and friends, and together show not fear or distaste for death, but respect for the dead one; and to give comfort to the living who will miss the deceased.

I recall the ritual mourning when my maternal grandmother died some 75 years ago. For five nights the family would gather to sing her praises and wail and mourn at her departure, led by a practiced professional mourner.

Such rituals are no longer observed. My family's sorrow is to be expressed in personal tributes to the matriarch of our family.

In October 2003 when she had her first stroke, we had a strong intimation of our mortality.

My wife and I have been together since 1947 for more than three quarters of our lives. My grief at her passing cannot be expressed in words. But today, when recounting our lives together, I would like to celebrate her life.

In our quiet moments, we would revisit our lives and times together. We had been most fortunate. At critical turning points in our lives, fortune favoured us.

As a young man with an interrupted education at Raffles College, and no steady job or profession, her parents did not look upon me as a desirable son-in-law. But she had faith in me.

We had committed ourselves to each other. I decided to leave for England in September 1946 to read law, leaving her to return to Raffles College to try to win one of the two Queen's Scholarships awarded yearly. We knew that only one Singaporean would be awarded. I had the resources, and sailed for England, and hoped that she would join me after winning the Queen's Scholarship.

If she did not win it, she would have to wait for me for three years.

In June the next year, 1947, she did win it. But the British colonial office could not get her a place in Cambridge.

Through Chief Clerk of Fitzwilliam, I discovered that my Censor at Fitzwilliam, W S Thatcher, was a good friend of the Mistress of Girton, Miss Butler.

He gave me a letter of introduction to the Mistress. She received me and I assured her that Choo would most likely take a "First", because she was the better student when we both were at Raffles College.

I had come up late by onetern to Cambridge, yet passed my first year qualifying examination with a class 1. She studied Choo's academic record and decided to admit her in October that same year, 1947.

We have kept each other company ever since. We married pri-

# The last farewell to my wife:

## An Eulogy to Kwa Geok Choo (1920-2010)



Kwa Geok Choo arrived for a dinner with her husband in 2006. (pic courtesy of: Roslan Rahman/AFP/Getty Images)

vately in December 1947 at Stratford-upon-Avon. At Cambridge, we both put in our best efforts. She took a first in two years in Law Tripos II. I took a double first, and a starred first for the finals, but in three years.

We did not disappoint our tutors. Our Cambridge Firsts gave us a good start in life. Returning to Singapore, we both were taken on as legal assistants in Laycock & Ong, a thriving law firm in Malacca Street. Then we married officially a second time that September 1950 to please our parents and friends. She practised conveyancing and draftsmanship, I did litigation.

In February 1952, our first son Hsien Loong was born. She took maternity leave for a year.

That February, I was asked by John Laycock, the Senior Partner, to take up the case of the Postal and Telecommunications Uniformed Staff Union, the postmen's union.

They were negotiating with the government for better terms and conditions of service. Negotiations were deadlocked and they decided to go on strike. It was a battle for public support. I was able to put across the reasonableness of their case through the press and radio. After a fortnight, they won concessions from the government. Choo, who was at home on maternity leave, pencilled through my draft statements, making them simple and clear.

Over the years, she influenced my writing style. Now I write in short sentences, in the active voice. We gradually influenced each other's ways and habits as we adjusted and accommodated each other.

We knew that we could not stay starry-eyed lovers all our lives; that life was an on-going challenge with new problems to resolve and manage.

We had two more children, Wei Ling in 1955 and Hsien Yang in 1957. She brought them up to be well-behaved, polite, considerate and never to throw their weight as the prime minister's children.

As a lawyer, she earned enough, to free me from worries about the future of our children.

She saw the price I paid for not having mastered Mandarin when I was young. We decided to send all three children to Chinese kindergarten and schools.

She made sure they learned English and Malay well at home. Her nurturing has equipped them for life in a multi-lingual region.

We never argued over the upbringing of our children, nor over financial matters. Our earnings and assets were jointly held. We were each other's confidant.

She had simple pleasures. We would walk around the Istana gardens in the evening, and I hit golf balls to relax.

Later, when we had grandchildren, she would take them to feed the fish and the swans in the Istana ponds. Then we would swim. She was interested in her surroundings, for instance, that many bird varieties were pushed out by mynahs and crows eating up the insects and vegetation.

She discovered the curator of the gardens had cleared wild grasses and swing fogged for mosquitoes, killing off insects they fed on. She stopped this and the bird varieties returned. She surrounded the swimming pool with free flowering scented flowers and derived great pleasure smelling them as she swam.

She knew each flower by its popular and botanical names. She had an enormous capacity for words.

She had majored in English literature at Raffles College and was a voracious reader, from Jane Austen to JRR Tolkien, from Thucydides' The Peloponnesian Wars to Virgil's Aeneid, to The Oxford Companion to Food, and Seafood of Southeast Asia, to Roadside Trees of Malaya, and Birds of Singapore.

She helped me draft the Constitution of the PAP. For the inaugural meeting at Victoria Memorial Hall on 4 November 1954, she gathered the wives of the founder members to sew rosettes for those who were going on stage.

In my first election for Tanjong Pagar, our home in Oxley Road, became the HQ to assign cars provided by my supporters to ferry vot-

ers to the polling booth.

She warned me that I could not trust my new found associates, the leftwing trade unionists led by Lim Chin Siong. She was furious that he never sent their high school student helpers to canvass for me in Tanjong Pagar, yet demanded the use of cars provided by my supporters to ferry my Tanjong Pagar voters.

She had an uncanny ability to read the character of a person. She would sometimes warn me to be careful of certain persons; often, she turned out to be right.

When we were about to join Malaysia, she told me that we would not succeed because the UMNO Malay leaders had such different lifestyles and because their politics were communally-based, on race and religion.

I replied that we had to make it work as there was no better choice. But she was right.

We were asked to leave Malaysia before two years.

When separation was imminent, Eddie Barker, as Law Minister, drew up the draft legislation for the separation. But he did not include an undertaking by the Federation Government to guarantee the observance of the two water agreements between the PUB and the Johor state government. I asked Choo to include this. She drafted the undertaking as part of the constitutional amendment of the Federation of Malaysia Constitution itself.

She was precise and meticulous in her choice of words. The amendment statute was annexed to the Separation Agreement, which we then registered with the United Nations.

The then Commonwealth Secretary Arthur Bottomley said that if other federations were to separate, he hoped they would do it as professionally as Singapore and Malaysia.

It was a compliment to Eddie's and Choo's professional skills. Each time Malaysian Malay leaders threatened to cut off our water supply, I was reassured that this clear and solemn international undertaking by the Malaysian government in its Constitution will get us a ruling by the UNSC (United Nations Security Council).

After her first stroke, she lost her left field of vision. This slowed down her reading. She learned to cope, reading with the help of a ruler. She swam every evening and kept fit. She continued to travel with me, and stayed active despite the stroke. She stayed in touch with her family and old friends.

She listened to her collection of CDs, mostly classical, plus some golden oldies. She jocularly divided her life into "before stroke" and "after stroke", like BC and AD.

She was friendly and consider-

ate to all associated with her. She would banter with her WSOs (woman security officers) and correct their English grammar and pronunciation in a friendly and cheerful way. Her former WSOs visited her when she was at NNI. I thank them all.

Her second stroke on 12 May 2008 was more disabling. I encouraged and cheered her on, helped by a magnificent team of doctors, surgeons, therapists and nurses.

Her nurses, WSOs and maids all grew fond of her because she was warm and considerate. When she coughed, she would take her small pillow to cover her mouth because she worried for them and did not want to infect them.

Her mind remained clear but her voice became weaker. When I kissed her on her cheek, she told me not to come too close to her in case I caught her pneumonia.

I assured her that the doctors did not think that was likely because I was active.

When given some peaches in hospital, she asked the maid to take one home for my lunch. I was at the centre of her life.

On 24 June 2008, a CT scan revealed another bleed again on the right side of her brain. There was not much more that medicine or surgery could do except to keep her comfortable.

I brought her home on 3 July 2008. The doctors expected her to last a few weeks. She lived till 2nd October, 2 years and 3 months.

She remained lucid. They gave time for me and my children to come to terms with the inevitable. In the final few months, her faculties declined. She could not speak but her cognition remained.

She looked forward to have me talk to her every evening.

Her last wish she shared with me was to enjoin our children to have our ashes placed together, as we were in life.

The last two years of her life were the most difficult. She was bedridden after small successive strokes; she could not speak but she was still cognisant.

Every night she would wait for me to sit by her to tell her of my day's activities and to read her favourite poems. Then she would sleep.

I have precious memories of our 63 years together. Without her, I would be a different man, with a different life. She devoted herself to me and our children.

She was always there when I needed her. She has lived a life full of warmth and meaning.

I should find solace at her 89 years of her life well lived. But at this moment of the final parting, my heart is heavy with sorrow and grief.

*(This eulogy by Singapore's Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew was delivered at the funeral service of his wife, Madam Kwa Geok Choo at a private ceremony at Mandai Crematorium on Oct 6th)*

# Mike Ahilan Elected as new President by Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce at Annual General Meeting



TORONTO (October 27, 2010) —The Annual General Meeting was held at the Karaikudi Chettinad Restaurant and brought in the new President with his team of board directors. The evening began with traditional South Indian Cuisine and moved on to the focus of the evening with the election of the new Board. Past President Ken Kirupa thanked his past board for their consistent hard work and commitment to the Chamber and recognized all of the past presidents and members who played a vital effort in the success of the events that took place during his term.

then explained the rules and regulations that the CTCC has in place and pronounced the newly selected Board of Directors and Auditors. Newly elected President Mike Ahilan addressed the members and conveyed his priorities as President and welcomed all the new and existing members to help to continue to excel in the business community with the CTCC's support.

Many members came and congratulated the new Board members and thanked the outgoing Board. The Past President Ken Kirupa welcomed the new President Mike Ahilan and his newly elected team of Directors.

The newly elected board consists of:

- Mike Ahilan - President
- Sritharan Thuraijajah - Vice President
- Santha Panchalingam - Secretary
- Kalyani Nathan - Treasurer
- Ravi Kanagasabay - Director
- Suresh Kumar - Director
- Navajeevan Anantharaj - Director
- Jude Francis - Director
- Ghajemukan Mahakanapathypillai - Director
- Jeyakumar Sinnadurai - Internal Auditor
- Albert Sabanathan - Internal Auditor

Kanish & Partners - External Auditor  
Canadian Tamils' Chamber entering into its 20th year and now with new President Mike Ahilan from RBC with 25 years financial experience along with his committee with experience from many other fields such as Information Technology, Social Networking, Web designs, Marketing, Hospitality Industry, Accounting, Real Estate, Insurance and Mortgage services, Engineering, Home improvement and Fire protection industries will no doubt be an asset for the business community who expects a new term to network and develop

their businesses in the coming year.

Monsoon Journal congratulates the new President and the committee and wish them all the best and is willing to promote their events and be a media partner.

For more information and to join as a member with the Chamber, please contact:

Mike Ahilan, President  
Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce  
416-220-1184  
mike.ahilan@rbc.com  
or webmaster@ctcc.ca



Kalyani Nathan with Secretary's Report – New Treasurer



Ken Kirupa with President's Report



New President Mike Ahilan with acceptance speech



Sritharan Thuraijajah re-elected as Vice President



Santha Panchalingam elected to executive committee as Secretary



Suresh Kumar elected as new director



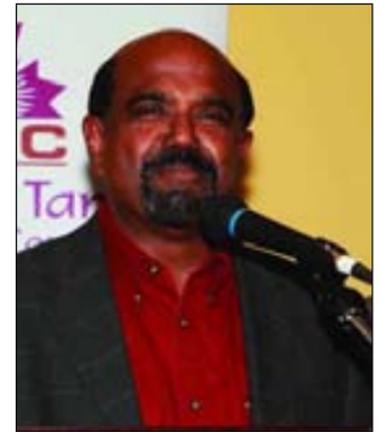
Jude Francis elected as new director



Ghajemukan Mahakanapathypillai elected as new director



Navajeevan Anantharaj elected as new director



Ravi Kanagasabay re-elected as director



Albert Sabanathan elected as new Internal Auditor



Deepak Kapoor, Regional Sales Manager Mortgages, RBC congratulating the new board



Jeyakumar Sinnadurai with Treasurer's Report continues as Internal Auditor



Newly Elected Board

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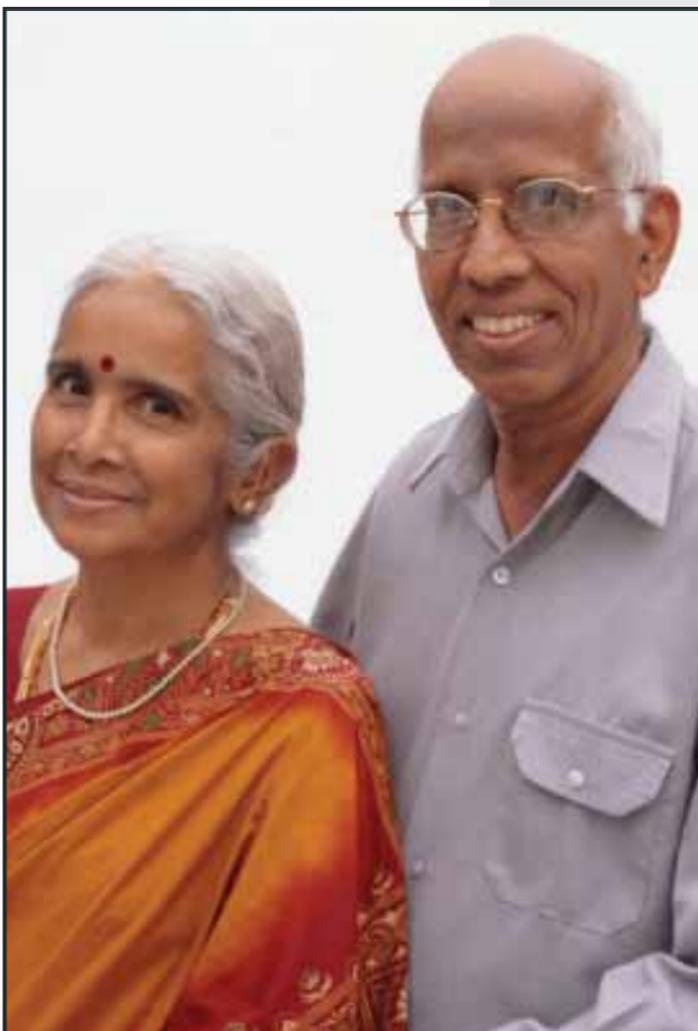
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