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A parfait media publication

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Premier McGuinty invites proposals from Opposition to improve Ontario Economy



By Siva Sivapragasam

Keeping true to the name of his Party, Premier McGuinty is liberal when it comes to inviting proposals from his Opposition buddies to improve Ontario's economy.

In a recent speech to the Economic Club in Toronto he invited his Opposition parties – PC & NDP in the Legislature to put forward good, constructive ideas that will help boost the Ontarian economy. He feels that the greatest responsibility in the Legislature is to work together to build a stronger economy for the benefit of all Ontarians. Referring to the global economy which is in a perilous shape he remarked that it will require discipline and some tough decision

making on the part of the Government.

The Premier is struggling with a \$ 16 billion budget deficit and wants the Government to act with restraint and reform. In spite of the glooming outlook he has promised not to raise taxes or privatize health care to save money. In the throne speech delivered recently the McGuinty Government feels that the crisis will linger on for another four years.

Spending cuts and service reductions are much in the air in the coming months. The McGuinty Government feels that the present economic gloom will linger on for another four years and forecasts that any new spending will need to come from savings realized elsewhere.

New Parent and Grandparent Super Visa implemented

Applications for the Parent and Grandparent Super Visa is being accepted from Dec 1, 2011, Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney has announced.

Statement from the Ministry:

The Parent and Grandparent Super Visa is one element of Phase I of the Action Plan for Faster Family Reunification, announced in November. The Super Visa will allow applicants to remain in Canada for up to 24 months at

a time without having to renew their status.

To be eligible, the applicant must:

- Be a parent or grandparent of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident;

- Provide a written commitment of financial support from their child or grandchild in Canada, including proof that the child or grandchild meets the minimum necessary income (Low Income Cut-Off);

- Undergo the Immigration Medical Examination;

- Submit proof that they have purchased comprehensive Canadian medical insurance, valid for at least one year; and
- Satisfy the visa officer that they meet all other standard admissibility criteria.

Current processing times through the Family Class indicate that many parents and grandparents could wait for eight years or more to be accepted to Canada. With the Super Visa, they could be enjoying the company of their family in about eight weeks.



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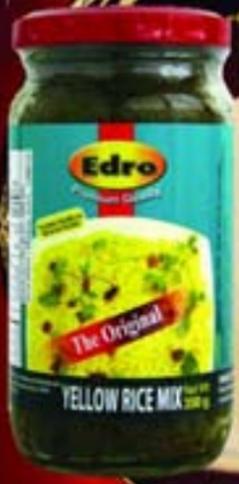
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Canada News

Ganesan Sugumar re-elected President, Beaches-East York Federal Liberal Association



The Annual General Meeting of the Beaches-East York Federal Liberal Association was held recently at the Royal Canadian Legion at Dawes Avenue, Toronto. Incumbent President Ganesan Sugumar was re-elected by popular vote to serve the Beaches-East York Federal Liberal Association. Assisting President Ganesan Sugumar will be four Vice Presidents – Sharon Swenson, Paul Kelly (Crown Attorney), Balgopal Jason (Crown Attorney), Derek J. Knipe (Provincial Prosecutor) who will form the Executive of this riding association and to conduct the annual business of the association.

Beaches—East York (formerly Beaches—Woodbine) is a federal electoral district in Toronto, Ontario,

Canada, that has been represented in the Canadian House of Commons since 1988. The riding combines two notable city neighbourhoods: the Beaches and part of the former borough of East York. This political boundary is an area used for both provincial and federal representation; municipally it is divided into two halves, with a councillor for the Beaches (Ward 32) in the south, and one for East York (Ward 31) to the north.

Hon. Maria Minna, P.C. held the Beaches-Woodbine riding for the Liberal Party of Canada from 1993 - 1997, and the Beaches-East York riding from 1997-2011 for the Liberal Party of Canada from 1997 - 2011 winning the Parliamentary Elections in 1997, 2000, 2004, 2006, and 2008.

Rathika Sitsabaieson protests cuts in govt funding for Ontario Immigration Settlement Services

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan

(Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):

Mr. Speaker, on Friday we learned that the government plans to slash \$31.5 million from immigration settlement services in Ontario. Community organizations are already struggling because of similar cuts last year and the year before.

Ontario remains the number one destination for immigration in Canada. Why is the government making it harder for newcomers to access the services that they need?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):

To the contrary, Mr. Speaker. We are now providing three times more in funding for immigrant settlement services in Ontario than was the case under the previous Liberal government. Next year, Ontario newcomers will receive more than was the case in 2005. It is true, however, that the number of immigrants settling in Ontario has declined quite significantly, from 64% to 52% of newcomers. They are going to other provinces; it is only fair that the settlement dollars follow the newcomers and that we have fair funding across the country.

Ms. Rathika Sitsabaiesan (Scarborough—Rouge River, NDP):

Mr. Speaker, the minister says he is doing better than bad. I guess that is the level that the government has set for itself.

With this shuffling of funds, we are still looking at an overall cut of \$6 million and \$45 million in cuts from two years ago, but the number of newcomers is at an all-time high. Pitting province against province is not going to solve the deficit.

This decision to cut services in Ontario was done without planning and with no warning. New Canadians are huge contributors to prosperity in this country. Will the minister maintain the key supports and services they need to



Rathika Sitsabaiesan MP

thrive in this country?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, the premise of the question is completely inaccurate. There has been a great deal of planning by my officials over the course of two years to ensure that the adjustment in funding from Ontario to provinces with growing immigration numbers happens in an orderly fashion.

In terms of giving people notice, we just gave notice this week to the small number of organizations in Ontario that will be affected at the beginning of the next fiscal year. We have given them several months' notice.

The question is, why does the member think that newcomers to Ontario should be receiving \$4,000 per capita in settlement services but that those in the rest of the country should receive only \$3,000? We believe that newcomers all across Canada deserve the same support.

* Ajax *

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from the publisher's desk

Every year Christmas is born Once Again!

When November ends, a central theme encompasses the world as we know it. Stores open longer, roads become busier and houses are lit up in festive colours. Every man, woman & child become anxious to welcome the holiday season and a joy is spread like no other. Moreover, it is this feeling of Christmas that is at the tip of everyone's tongue and at the end of everyone's thoughts at this time. Every event, action or day at work in the month December reminds us of Christmas, the celebratory birth of Jesus Christ.

If you were to quiz ten random adults, regardless of religion or race you can guess that at least eight would be able to name most of the key elements

of the narration of Jesus' birth. Such is the significance of the impact of Christmas in our lives, that this story would be relatively familiar to our normal day to day lives, and not necessarily because of our reading of a Christian Bible.

Of the Four Gospels however, the birth of Jesus is talked about in Matthew and Luke mainly. Although the context is not identical, the gospels share the same aspects and have helped to formulate the common perception of Jesus' birth in popular culture. Jesus Christ is spiritually believed by Christians to be the Son of God, born in human mould through Mary of Nazareth. Mary is also believed to be virgin, and Jesus' birth only occurred after God

found favour in her, and made her pregnant. The Gospel of Luke describes the nativity scene we culturally accept, being the manger in Bethlehem. While Mathew goes on to show that Joseph, who was engaged to Mary, was even afraid of her pregnancy. However, he was also convinced by God through a dream, and so he protected Mary and took her as his wife.

Finally, we have the baby Jesus being born into the world, bringing joy to all. Joy to Christians because their Messiah is born, but also to non-Christians today, who believe that the Christmas season itself is a savior from normal day-to-day life. We should note too that celebrating the season of Christmas also does not directly

imply one is embracing Christianity as a religion. It is simply just a special time that dictates an unmatched feeling of kindness that is inexplicable anytime else. We can all attest that at this time of the year, hearts are generally warmer, words are generally softer and even at work bosses are somewhat nicer. Individuals hold a special spot in their persona to embrace the season, as it is born each year into our lives and becomes a part of us.

So here's to the Christmas spirit! On behalf of the Monsoon Journal team have a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and Best Wishes in 2012!

**Contributed by:
Tashvir Narine,
B. Sc (Hons)**

Canadians raise over \$32 million for Movember

**By: Krishni Loganathan,
BA (Hons)**

The month of November is over and so are the "Mo's". Movember marking men's health awareness month sparked conversation all over the world. As men grew their moustaches for 1 whole month for one of the most common type of cancers amongst men, prostate cancer.

Many courageous participants took part in this great cause including Amish Patel, Tashvir Narine and Logan Velumailum seen in the pictures below. Girlfriends and wives supported their partner for the month of November as their men's mo's sprouted. Although these mo's were groomed, it was not an easy task of growing

these mo's for an entire month.

Participants created their "Mo" page and asked for donations from their friends, family and co-workers to raise money for prostate cancer.

Through online donations alone, Canadians raised over \$32 million, topping the list of countries participating in the Movember campaign. Internationally, Movember raised over \$98 million with Canada having the second most number of participants with 246,000 and Britain in first with 252,000 participants.

As Movember ends, the discussions on men's health will not. Conversation will continue and provide support to men while also encouraging them to change their old habits.



Amish Patel - Day 1



Amish Patel - Day 30



Publisher - Day 1



Publisher - Day 30



Tashvir Narine - Day 3



Tashvir Narine - Day 30

Popular Sri Lankan parliamentarian Abdul Majeed passes away

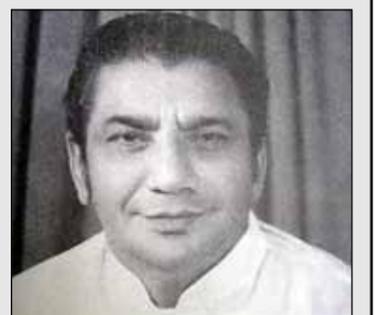
Former parliamentarian for Pottuvil and Sammanthurai in Sri Lanka East M.A. Abdul Majeed passed away on Nov 29, 2011, at the age of 85. He was the first Bachelor of Arts (BA) graduate from Amparai district Muslims and was a Member of Sri Lanka Parliament continu-

ously from 1960 to 1994.

Hon. Majeed began his education under the teaching of Tamil scholar Vipulananda Adigal. He attended the Government school in Sammanthurai and later Sivananda Vidyalayam in Batticaloa. In 1950 he graduated with a BA in Economics from the

University of Colombo.

Abdul Majeed served as Deputy Minister, District Minister and held Ministerial portfolios in United National Party governments. Abdul Majeed is well known as a true friend of Tamils and a firm adherent of Muslim-Tamil unity.



M.A. Abdul Majeed
(Oct 15, 1926 - Nov 29, 2011)



Canada News

ORBIS Flying Eye Hospital Canada Goodwill Tour - Toronto

The tour started off with media and public tours onboard the ORBIS Flying Eye Hospital from Nov 17th before the big Grand Reception in the evening of Nov 18th and went onto with public tours on Saturday, Nov 19th.

Toronto witnessed the converted DC-10 aircraft that contains a state-of-the-art surgical and teaching facility and was able to learn about ORBIS volunteer eye care professionals and pilots who are dedicated to giving the gift of sight to people in developing countries around the world. The Grand Reception took place inside Cargo 2 at the Cargo West

Facilities at Pearson International Airport that was kicked off the evening with a dance performance.

Dr. Brian Leonard, Chairman of the ORBIS Canada Board of Directors welcomed everyone to the event.

Also there were presentations too. Phil Gillin, Senior Managing Director, Head Canadian Real Estate at Sun Life Financial presented a cheque to ORBIS Canada.

Peter McQuillan, Vice President of Finance - Canada for FedEx Express presented a cheque to ORBIS Canada.

Toronto based Canadian Medical

Professionals and Volunteer group were recognized at the event.

There were games and sponsor booths at the reception to help raise funds for sight saving programs in the developing world.

ORBIS Canada is part of a non-aligned, non-profit global development organization whose mission is to prevent and treat blindness by providing quality eye care to transform lives. ORBIS draws upon an international faculty of more than 500 volunteer ophthalmologists, nurses, and biomedical engineers, approximately 45 of them Canadian, to

deliver eye care training and treatment in the most underserved regions of the world. Since its programs were first launched 29 years ago, ORBIS has benefited people in 89 countries, enhancing the skills of 88,000 doctors and over 200,000 nurses and other medical professionals. Medical and eye treatments have been provided to 15 million patients, of which 4.7 million are children. The support from Canadian donors is instrumental in the implementation of its global sight-saving programs.

Seen here are some photos taken during the tour.



Dr Brian Leonard, Chairman of the Orbis Canada Board of Directors welcomed everyone to the event



Volunteer Pilot in Cockpit



Perry Athanason, Communications Manager talking to media



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Daniella Bianchi, Director of Development at ORBIS Canada talking to media



Peter McQuillan, Vice President of Finance - Canada for FedEx Express presents a cheque to ORBIS Canada



Phil Gillin, Senior Managing Director, Head Canadian Real Estate at Sun Life Financial presents a cheque to ORBIS Canada

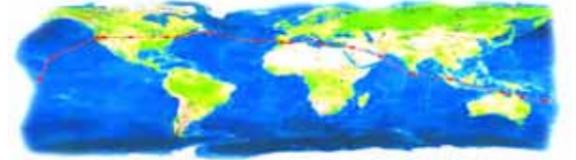


Pic on Right: Toronto based Canadian Medical Professionals

Pic on Left: Recovering Area



Around the world



Jayalalithaa opposes foreign direct investment in Tamil Nadu retail sector



Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Ms. J. Jayalalithaa

Flaying the Centre's decision to allow Foreign Direct Investment in retail, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on Sunday, Nov 27th alleged it was taken under pressure from a few retail giants and asserted her government would not allow multi-brand global players to set up their markets in the state.

Strongly opposing the decision to open up retail trade to FDI, Ms. Jayalalithaa demanded that the Congress-led UPA government reverse the 'ill-advised' move as it would not serve to bring down inflation or improve market efficiency.

Rather, the domestic manufacturing and services sector would take a serious hit and the retail trade completely taken over by the MNC dominated big retail giants, which is not good for the country, she said in a strongly-worded statement.

"While Parliament is in session, this move of the Government of India..without even consulting the state governments is unprecedented and indicates the overweening arrogance of the UPA government," she said.

The FDI policy in the retail sector was a "sensitive issue and by making this sudden announcement ignoring the sentiments of the people, the Central government has stirred the 'proverbial Hornet's Nest,'" she said.

Ms. Jayalalithaa described the Centre's move as a "wrong decision, taken under pressure from a few retail giants starved for capital infusion for their future survival."

Justifying her stand, she said her government "will not allow the multi brand global players as permitted under the new policy to set up their hyper markets in Tamil Nadu."

While the government talked about creation of jobs for 10 million in the next three years, "it will lead to 40 million people being uprooted and thrown out from their business, she said.

Ms. Jayalalithaa said the purported intention behind the move seemed to be bringing more foreign investment to India and to bring down double digit inflation which was mainly "due to the series of policy blunders" made by the Congress-led UPA.

The Centre "should realise that constraints on farm products on the supply side, cannot be addressed through the FDI route, but only by squarely addressing the infrastructural constraints through appropriate policy support." Elaborating on her contention, Ms. Jayalalithaa mentioned the cases of the UK and Thailand where retail chains reportedly controlled the major share of the market. She said the MNC experience in many countries showed that the "price mark up by such MNCs is much higher than what is being charged by the small vendors." Holding that "any amount of safeguards will not be any use in protecting the interests of the domestic sector," Ms. Jayalalithaa demanded that the Centre's decision be reversed.

"The Centre's announcement has come as a thunderbolt and shocked millions of small vendors who have been completely taken off guard," she said.

As the decision would affect the livelihood of millions of small departmental store owners and "completely destroy the unorganised retail sector within the next couple of years," Ms. Jayalalithaa said she strongly opposed the move to open up the retail trade to Foreign Direct Investment.

- PTI

India Opens Up to Foreign Retailers Despite Concerns Over Job Losses

By Anjana Pasricha

In India, the government hopes that its decision to allow foreign retailers into the country will bring in billions of dollars of investment, create millions of jobs and modernize India's retail sector.

India's Commerce Minister Anand Sharma says the government has built in safeguards to protect farmers and small shopkeepers while allowing the entry of foreign retailers like Walmart and Tesco into the country.

Foreign retailers have been given the green signal to invest up to 51 percent in multi brand retail, such as supermarkets. Foreign companies can now invest up to 100 percent in single brand retailers.

The new foreign superstores will be allowed to set up shop in cities with a population of at least one million. They must invest at least \$100 million and half of this would have to be invested in rural infrastructure and refrigerated transport and storage. Thirty percent of their produce would also have to come from small and medium enterprises.

Global retail giants have waited for years for India to open its \$ 450 billion domestic retail market, which is still largely dominated by mom and pop stores. But the government hesitated due to fears that the entry of foreign supermarkets will wipe out local livelihoods.

A day after allowing foreign direct investment or FDI in retail, Commerce Minister Anand Sharma tried to calm such concerns.

"This step which we have taken is an investment in the present and the future of this country," he said. "This will help immensely India's farmers. It will help in creating jobs both in manufacturing as well as in the agro and food processing sectors. It will bring in enormous amounts of FDI into this country to build the infrastructure."

Over the next three years, Sharma said foreign retailers could help create up to 10 million jobs, many of them in rural



Ashwani Dang, owner of a mom and pop store, bargains with a customer at Karol Bagh market in New Delhi, India, November 24, 2011-Reuters.

areas. He says the establishment of cold storage facilities by these retail chains will improve India's decrepit infrastructure which results in up to 50 percent losses of fresh produce.

He also says farmers will benefit immensely by getting higher prices. At present they get a fraction of the price paid by consumers due to the presence of several middle men in India's antiquated retail supply chain.

But the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party remains unconvinced. A senior BJP leader, Yashwant Sinha says the party will lead a nationwide movement to oppose the entry of global retail giants. Foreign retailers will wipe out small shopkeepers in the country and only the big players will survive, Sinha argues, warning that unemployment will rise in a big way. India's retail sector is the second biggest employer after agriculture. The Communist Party of India also has misgivings, says its senior leader Sitarm Yechury.

Yechury says the influx of foreign capital in retail trade will be a huge threat to local jobs. It will not increase employment, it will take away livelihoods.

There are also concerns that although the federal government has approved the move, several state governments, ruled by opposition parties, could block the entry of foreign retailers into their states.

[VOA News]



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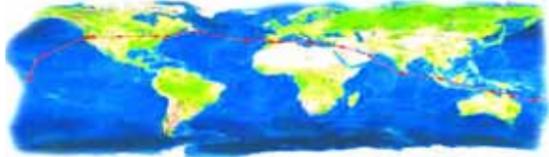
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Around the world

Sri Lanka expropriations will hurt economy: EIU

A Venezuela-style law in Sri Lanka to expropriate dozens of private enterprises will hurt the economy, undermine policy predictability and scare investors despite state assurances that it will be a 'one off', UK-based Economist Intelligence Unit has said, according to a report in Sri Lanka's premier business web portal lankabusinessonline.com. The report further states,

"The Sri Lankan authorities have repeatedly tried to assure investors that this is a 'one-off' measure which will not be repeated," Economist Intelligence Unit - EIU said in a risk analysis.

"Unavoidably, however, the move undermines the predictability of policy-making and increases uncertainty for foreign investors.

Though Sri Lanka's ruling coalition's two thirds majority or political stability has been cited as a factor favoring investors unpredictable policy, especially relating to property rights, from a stable regime has the same effect as unpredictable policy from different regimes.

Robert Higgs a US economist described the phenomenon as the likeli-

hood of state action that will either undermine private property rights or return and yields on investments.

"Such attenuations can arise from many sources, ranging from simple tax-rate increases, to the imposition of new kinds of taxes, to outright confiscation of private property," Higgs wrote in a 1997 paper.

"In any event, the security of private property rights rests not so much on the letter of the law as on the character of the government that enforces, or threatens, presumptive rights."

EIU said the law which deemed some 37 firms as 'under-utilized' or 'under-performing' also resembled similar asset seizures in other populist countries.

"It also raises uncomfortable echoes of the actions of populist Latin American governments, notably Venezuela, which has repeatedly used similar excuses to nationalise foreign-owned land and companies," EIU said.

"As this comparison suggests, Sri Lanka's expropriation law is likely to be economically counter-productive."

All the firms had either received state

land grants, were privatized or had received tax breaks.

EIU said the asset seizures will be "particularly counter-productive at a time when Sri Lanka is keenly seeking foreign investment for development following the end of the civil war."

The legislative process that was used to pass the law was also a concern, EIU said.

Critics have said that the law is deeply flawed in that it trespassed on a constitutional separation of powers, and amounted ad hominem law, which targeted specific citizens.

"Firstly, the passage of a law which specifically lists assets to be expropriated, rather than a general set of principles to be applied, appears to conflate the roles of the executive and the judiciary with that of the legislature," EIU said.

"Secondly, the speed with which the legislation was pushed through will add to the political opposition's concerns that the government is using its two-thirds majority to consolidate its grip on power.

"Sri Lanka's main opposition United National Party and the Marxist Janatha

Vimukthi Peramuna party have alleged that the government is targeting businesses linked to opposition parties, a charge the government denies."

EIU said Sri Lanka had recently made gains in a World Bank doing business ranking.

"However, the passage of an expropriation law with scarcely any public scrutiny or debate is likely to undo at least some of this progress in the eyes of foreign firms."

Among the firms listed for expropriations was a Singapore based firm and another with an Indian connection.

Sri Lanka had a history of violating property rights with international oil companies, foreign owned tea plantations, the EIU said. A new constitution in 1978 had sought to allay such fears giving strong guarantees.

Sri Lanka's supreme court however had reportedly given a determination saying the expropriation law was not inconsistent with the constitution, lankabusinessonline.com said in the report.

Sri Lanka rupee adjustment in right direction: IMF

Sri Lanka's rupee devaluation announced on the budget presentation on Nov 21st was a step in the right direction, and a planned narrower budget deficit would reduce the country debt burden, an International Monetary Fund official has said, according to a report on business web portal Lanka Business Online.

The report further stated:

"We think that the exchange rate adjustment was a step in the right direction and should help support Sri Lanka's export competitiveness and safeguard its reserves over the medium term," IMF resident representative Koshy Mathai said.

Sri Lanka has lost foreign reserves since peg defence began in mid 2011 and active sterilizations of interventions began in August.

Sri Lanka's exports grew 38 percent to August but the trade deficit has been high, driven by rising domestic spending power coming from net borrowings abroad and inward remittances from Sri Lankans resident abroad.

In the spot dollar market the rupee fell to 114.15/20 rupees on Nov 23rd after an official guidance band was dropped 30 cents. The rate was put back at 113.90 later in the day.

The rupee fell more than three percent on Nov 22nd after President



Mahinda Rajapaksa said in a budget speech that the currency should be devalued. There has been some uncertainty in both forex and bond markets after announcement.

The budget planned a deficit of 6.2 percent of gross domestic product.

"Our initial impression is that the budget also seems to be broadly consistent with the authorities' earlier articulated plans, though we are continuing to study this complex document," Mathai said.

"The targeted reduction in the deficit, while smaller than originally envisaged, should nonetheless help keep the debt-GDP ratio on a declining path."

An IMF mission is due in Colombo in January, the Lanka Business Online reported.

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A survivor story

(As part of the Patient Appreciation Day, RVHS presented this personal blog)

By Tracy Paterson, Vice President, RVHS Foundation and breast cancer survivor

A few years ago, I never imagined I'd be writing a blog about being a breast cancer survivor. But here I am doing just that.

This December marks three years since I had my mastectomy. I sure didn't expect that, at age 45, after finding a lump in my breast, and after a mammography and ultrasound revealed that it was highly suspicious for breast cancer, that I'd soon have to have my breast removed. I had none of the typical risk factors for breast cancer, and I'm the first one in my family and among my friends to have a diagnosis.

It certainly was strange being on the receiving end of patient care at the place where I went to work every day. But I had faith in my colleagues, and I was also fortunate to be treated in my community hospital, so that I could be close to my husband, daughters, friends and colleagues.

I remember thinking before my surgery about all the equipment that I would typically point out to potential donors during hospital tours. Who knew that I would one day be using it?

When I awoke from surgery, there was a Christmas tree in my room decorated by my friends. It was a touching gesture, given how crummy it feels to be in the hospital over the holidays. When you're faced with a critical illness, you're not the only one dealing with your diagnosis and treatment. Your family and friends are affected too.

For the next year, I underwent my chemotherapy and radiation treatments just like the many patients who visit the chemo clinic at Rouge Valley Centenary. Having regular chemo sessions became a new, but weird, kind of normal. The chemo centre was very busy, and inevitably over the long hours of treatment, you'd strike up friendships with those sitting next to you. Some people are really outgoing and forthright about their disease. Others are more reserved. Scared, really.

This part of my treatment was rough, though. The chemo cocktail of drugs prescribed for me left me feeling weak and tired. Plus, I lost all my hair, including the hair on my head, nose hairs, eyebrows and eyelashes. Boy did I miss my eyelashes! You never think about how important they are until the soap you use to wash your face runs into your eyes and they begin to burn.

However, I'm fortunate that during that time, my fantastic colleagues were so supportive, and that my job allowed me to

work from home or to come into the office when I was feeling up to it. If I was working in the office, the other staff members were careful not to come in if they weren't feeling well, and were sympathetic when I was feeling under the weather.

And let me tell you, you really think about how important hand hygiene is when simple hand washing can make a difference to your health and well-being.

Cancer is different for everyone. No two stories are the same. What I experienced three years ago may be completely different from what someone else experiences today. But know that it is possible to survive it. I'm a walking example of that.

During my treatment, I remember my two daughters looking up statistics on the internet and, after seeing the high survival rates for cancer, decided I was going to be just fine. It turns out that they were right.

Today, although I'm at risk for recurrence, I only need a follow-up MRI once a year.

I'm hesitant to say that things always happen for a reason, but maybe it's true to some degree. Three years after my mastectomy, we now have a brand new, state-of-the-art MRI at Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering. Having this quality of treatment available to our patients, and right in our community, is significant. It means that our patients no longer need to travel



outside of west Durham to receive this kind of care, which many of us can appreciate.

Waiting for a diagnosis or treatment is incredibly scary and stressful. And bringing down wait times and ensuring that life-saving equipment and services are available closer to home now are even more meaningful to me.

When I'm giving a tour to a donor of one of our hospital campuses and I pass by patients waiting in the lobby looking a little nervous, I wonder what they're thinking. Especially since I was once in their shoes. I'm so very grateful to those compassionate, warm and knowledgeable health care professionals who saved my life three Christmases ago.

This Christmas, once again, I'll be holding my breath a little. Hoping and praying that my MRI scans stay clear. And I'll also be crossing my fingers for all those worried-looking people who I see in the lobby.

Rouge Valley wins gold workplace award

Hospital recognized in ministry and OHA 2011 Quality Healthcare Workplace Awards

Rouge Valley Health System's (RVHS) commitment to creating a healthy workplace for its 2,800 staff, physicians and volunteers has been recognized with a gold Quality Healthcare Workplace Award.

The awards, which are in their second year, were presented by the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care – HealthForceOntario.

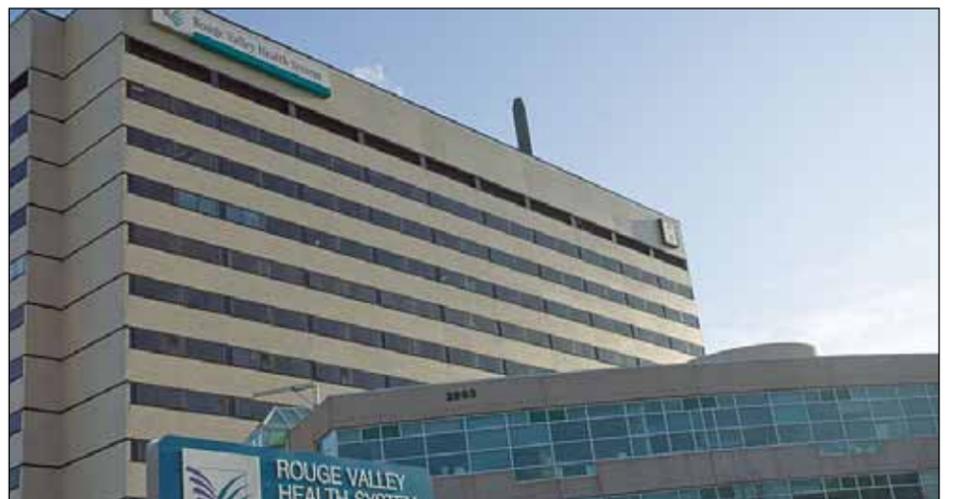
RVHS was among 37 health care organizations across Ontario recognized for efforts to improve the workplace in ways that contribute to employees' quality of work life and the quality of the care and services delivered. The winners were honoured last week during the OHA's annual HealthAchieve conference at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Last year, RVHS earned the silver award.

"We're honoured to have received this

gold award. We understand that a healthy work environment results in better quality of care and services, and ultimately in better care for our patients. Creating a healthy workplace is a priority at RVHS, and we're proud to be recognized," says Kathy Gooding, vice president, human resources, RVHS. She, along with Rik Ganderton, president and chief executive officer, and Shelley Davie, healthy workplace coordinator, accepted the award on behalf of RVHS.

The award has four levels – bronze, silver, gold and platinum – designed to encourage self-evaluation, learning and improvement. A high-caliber adjudication panel of quality workplace experts completed a rigorous assessment process when reviewing all the candidates, which focused on drivers of employee and organizational health.

The awards acknowledge an organiza-



tion's efforts to help maximize the employees' workplace experience, the quality of patient outcomes and organizational performance. Rouge Valley's award submission highlighted many of its innovative initia-

tives, including training and development for staff; how RVHS encourages and promotes respect for employees; better internal communication between the hospital and its employees, and more.



Health & Fitness

Have a Healthy Holiday!



This' the season for delicious, baked goods, tantalizing turkey dinners, mouth watering chocolate and tasty treats. Add cold weather, no time for exercise and a stressful shopping list and you've got a recipe for a holiday health disaster! So, how do you enjoy the wonderful spirit of Christmas and stay healthy? Well, below are some tips to help you make the holiday season a blissful and healthy one!

Portions Portions and Portions!

What do you do when your best friend invites you over for a home cooked, gourmet "Christmas dinner" which really consists of chicken fingers and French fries? The answer is portion control! When all else fails, this is your key to staying healthy. Munch on a small portion so you don't seem too high maintenance but at the same time don't take down thousands of unhealthy calories just to be polite. She's your best friend, she'll understand.

Avoid excessive alcohol.

A glass of Merlot is perfectly fine but when you have one at the holiday dinner with your co-workers on Thursday, then another at the Kris Kringle with your friends on Friday, and another at turkey dinner with your family on Saturday and yet another at brunch with your parents on Sunday then the multiple glasses really add up and so do the calories! Try to limit your intake to one or two glasses

and replace it with a hot beverage such as tea or cider.

Warm up with hot yoga.

In the cold winter months, hot yoga is bliss. It's the best way to warm up and get a great workout. In a one hour practice, you can burn between 500 to 600 calories! That's equivalent to a side of mashed potatoes. It's also the best way to de-stress and rejuvenate after a hard day of holiday chaos!

Pop some pills!

Not the prescription kind but more like a multivitamin, vitamin C and D. During the holiday season, it's difficult to get the adequate nutrition your body needs. Take a multivitamin to keep your body in check.

Try to get a restful sleep.

With a jam packed schedule, it's hard to get to bed at a reasonable time. Try to get to bed early and aim for at least 7 hours of sleep. Especially during the cold winter months, a restful sleep will help keep your immune system strong and give you energy to make it through the next hectic day.

Try to prepare meals at home.

This is especially difficult during the holidays with the endless parties and festivities. Preparing quick meals at home is great way to stay healthy and save some money! Try healthy grill cheese

By Ayktah Grover
 Founder, Aura Wellness
 Certified Nutrition, Fitness, Pre and Post Natal Specialist

sandwiches, chicken stir fry (you can use frozen vegetables to save time!), or an easy bean chilli!

Get some down time.

The hustle bustle of the holiday season can get very stressful and weigh heavily on your health. Make sure to take time out for yourself and perform activities that help you relax and de-stress. Try a warm bath, meditation, yoga, reading your favourite book, watching an episode of grey's anatomy or simply going out for a walk.

Don't be a mall rat.

Make a list and check it twice. Don't spend endless hours roaming the malls trying to find the best gift. Do your research, ask your family and friends, speak to others about where to find the deals and make a list of things to buy so you are not stressing about buying the

perfect gift. You can also avoid malls altogether and shop online – no line ups, no busy mall, no angry people, no fights for parking spots and no stress. Now that's a deal!

Stay on a budget.

Holidays can be very stressful because we tend to overspend. You need presents for co-workers, friends, family, neighbours, and the list continues! Try to stay within a budget and find the best possible deals. Don't save your shopping till the last minute so you end up buying things at regular price. Stick to your budget and save yourself the stress.

It's important to stay healthy during the holidays but it's also important to enjoy, have fun and laugh with friends and family during the holiday season! Use these tips to be merry and healthy!

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Recent Event

Great Heroes Day - 2011

Thousands of Tamils gathered for Great Heroes Day Event around the globe on Sunday, November 27th. In the Toronto area, four sessions were held at Markham Fairgrounds. In picture: The day of paying homage to heroes in Montreal & Toronto



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Questions to Ask Yourself	Bank Mortgage Insurance	London Life Insurance
1. Who owns the policy?	1. The bank owns the insurance policy.	1. Client owns their own Policy.
2. Who controls the policy?	2. The bank controls all the options.	2. Insured has control of all the options.
3. Can I guarantee I will always be covered?	3. Your policy will lapse if your mortgage goes into arrears.	3. Policy will not lapse if you miss a Mortgage payment.
4. Who is my beneficiary?	4. Your Beneficiary is the Bank.	4. You can name any Beneficiary you want.
5. What kind of coverage do I have?	5. Your coverage is decreasing term with level cost.	5. Level term coverage with fixed premiums.
6. Can I be covered if I change mortgage holders?	6. Moving the mortgage means reapplying for insurance.	6. Your covered regardless of which institution you choose.
7. How much insurance do I have?	7. Face amount of the policy cannot exceed the value of the outstanding mortgage.	7. Your coverage is determined by your needs and wants.
8. What options do I have if I or my spouse dies?	8. No option but to pay off the mortgage.	8. Survivor can invest the money and use returns to pay the mortgage and still keep the capital.
9. Can I convert my insurance to a permanent plan at any time?	9. Not extendible.	9. Your policy is renewable and convertible.
10. Am I penalized for casual deposits?	10. Penalizes casual deposits.	10. Rewards casual deposits.
11. Who guarantees that I am covered if I die?	11. Underwriting is done at time of death and research can date back to birth.	11. Underwriting is done at time of application and before a second premium is paid.
12. Who is more expensive?	12. Can be very expensive.	12. We are very competitive.

Richmond Hill

Mayor's Golf Tournament Raises Funds for Local Charities

Mayor Dave Barrow announced that \$80,000 was raised in support of local charities at this year's Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament held this past June. Mayor Barrow thanked the golfers and sponsors, whose support over the past 18 years has been integral in making the Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament one of the most popular and successful charity tournaments in Southern Ontario. Since its inception, the tournament has raised nearly \$1.2 million benefitting more than 39 different local charitable groups. In attendance at the Council Meeting were

representatives from this year's charity recipients: PKD Foundation of Canada, whose mission is to promote programs of research, advocacy, education and awareness on a local level, in order to discover treatments and a cure for Polycystic Kidney Disease and improve the lives of all it affects; and Pathways for Children, Youth and Families of York Region; a community-based organization empowering children, youth and families through prevention, education and advocacy to enhance their overall well-being. Each received a cheque for \$40,000.

Council Supports Young Leader

Council approved a request for sponsorship for Richmond Hill resident, Severina Lutaj towards participation in the 2011 Forum for Young Canadians in the amount of \$250. Ms. Lutaj, president of the Alexander Mackenzie High School student body, has a keen interest in

engaging youth in our community and raising awareness on current social affairs within Richmond Hill and Canada.

She was chosen, along with more than 100 other students aged 15 to 19 years from across Canada to attend the

Retaining & Expanding the Business Community a Priority in Richmond Hill

Council approved the Economic Development Marketing Strategy, which will help the Town to attract and grow its business community. The Strategy is the latest in a line up of important documents that support the Town's vision of sustained economic growth built on innovation, investment, entrepreneurship, creativity and quality of place. In April 2010, Council approved an Economic Development Strategy for the Town. In January 2011, a Sector Strategy was developed to assist in the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy. The next step was to develop a

far-reaching strategic marketing plan that would effectively position the Town's brand, reach target audiences and grow awareness of the business community in Richmond Hill and beyond. The Economic Development Marketing Strategy does this and recommends that the municipality explore non-traditional advertising and promotional tactics, engaging target audiences using more interactive and convenient tools (i.e. event web streaming, e-newsletters, social media, etc.). Implementation of the Plan is expected to begin soon.

Forum in Ottawa (November 13 to 18) where they'll spend a week on Parliament Hill and experience first-hand how Canadian government works. Forum participants will meet the nation's leaders, interact with decision-makers and debate contemporary issues. They will also have the special privilege of sitting in both the House of Commons and Senate with the Speakers of both chambers, who are co-honorary Chairs

of the Forum. The Forum for Young Canadians is a program of the Foundation for the Study of Processes of Government in Canada, a non-profit registered charitable organization founded in 1975. Its goal is to foster an understanding among young Canadians of the role and function of Canada's three levels of democratic government, while promoting awareness of the meaning of Canadian citizenship.

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York Region News

York Region employees raise \$381,000 for the United Way of York Region Staff exceed goal of \$380,000 and conclude most successful campaign to date

The Regional Municipality of York and York Regional Police have raised \$381,000 for the United Way of York Region, capping our most successful United Way fundraising campaign ever.

Today's announcement was the culmination of a staff-led campaign that kicked off at a ceremony on September 13 at the Administrative Centre with a campaign goal of \$380,000.

"Our employee's commitment to giving back is commendable," said York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch. "This was our biggest staff campaign yet and York Region staff recognized a need within our community and stepped up to assist. The services United Way provide are essential for our growing region to thrive, and make positive change a reality."

Since 1995, the Region has raised more than \$1.6 million for the United Way of York Region. In 2010, a staff cam-

paign goal of \$300,000 was exceeded with \$320,000 raised.

"I wish to extend my congratulations to the staff of York Region and York Regional Police for exceeding their goal," said Daniele Zanotti, Chief Executive Officer of the United Way of York Region. "This year's staff goal was ambitious and York Region employees proved up for the challenge. This significant contribution will help United Way-funded agencies continue to provide vital services to hundreds of thousands of people."

York Region employees participated in a number of fundraising events, including a payroll pledge campaign, 3-on-3 hockey and softball tournaments, plus raffle draws.

The campaign was Co-Chaired by York Regional Police Deputy Chief Thomas Carrique and York Region Commissioner of Environmental Services, Erin Mahoney.

Save a life with CPR

York Region EMS encourages residents to learn Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

The Regional Municipality of York Emergency Medical Services (EMS) encourages residents to take a Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) course and possibly save the life of someone experiencing sudden cardiac arrest.

Sudden cardiac arrest happens when a person stops breathing and the heart stops beating. According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario (HSFO), up to 45,000 sudden cardiac arrests occur each year in Canada.

CPR is a life-saving procedure involving chest compressions (pressing down on the chest) and artificial respirations (rescue breathing). It has the power to restore blood flow to someone suffering a sudden cardiac arrest, keeping them alive until paramedics or emergency service personnel arrive.

Once the heart stops pumping, sec-

onds count. According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, for every minute that passes without CPR, a person's chance of surviving drops by about 10 per cent. If you know how to respond to a sudden cardiac arrest, a person's odds of survival and recovery may increase.

Learning CPR is easy and inexpensive – just a few hours could make an important difference in someone's life. Since most cardiac arrests happen at home, you could be saving the life of a family member or friend.

Contact an accredited CPR agency to find out about courses in your area.

For more information on this or any other public health-related topic, please contact York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933, or visit www.york.ca

"United Way supports a large network of programs which provide vital support for new immigrants, the elderly and abused women; the people who will directly benefit from the generous support of everyone," said Deputy Chief

Carrique. "The generosity of the staff will ensure a troubled youth receives help securing long-term employment, provide a family in poverty with food and an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing with the support they need."

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Arts and Forms



Malarvilly Janagan
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Nova Bhattacharya Dancer/Choreographer

Nova Bhattacharya has been acclaimed as one of Canada's most captivating dance artists. She has trained with some of Bharatanatyam's most esteemed teachers including Menaka Thakkar, Kalanidhi Narayan and Kitappa Pillai. Her development in contemporary dance has been informed by her ongoing work with Peggy Baker, Sasha Ivanochko and Louis Laberge-Côté and in butoh by Yumiko Yoshioka and Denise Fujiwara. She was a member of Menaka Thakkar and Company for eleven years, appearing as a soloist and company member for many national and international tours. In 1986 she embarked on a career as an independent artist. Described in *The Globe & Mail* as possessing a style that is "bold and disturbingly direct" Bhattacharya is a vivacious performer with a charismatic stage presence, recognized for her strong technique and thoughtful characterizations. She has appeared in the works of Joan Phillips, Sinha Danse, Fujiwara Dance Inventions, Kaeja D'dance, Viv Moore and Bouchardanse.

Eager to explore the scope for innovation within the Bharatanatyam

and Toronto Dance Theatre.

Bhattacharya's artistry is a reflection of her classical training and present-day aesthetic, her work is formally rigorous and displays an eloquence that goes beyond pure movement.

Company:

Established in 2008, Ipsita Nova Dance Projects is led by dancer and choreographer Nova Bhattacharya, who brings her classical Bharatanatyam training into the world of contemporary dance with elegance and authority. Through a varied and acclaimed repertoire - which includes creations from Bhattacharya, Peggy Baker, Mika Kurosawa, Dana Gingras, José Navas, Menaka Thakkar and most recently Laurence Lemieux - audiences are exposed to an expanse of movement drawn from classical vocabulary, integrated with improvised movement, rigorously structured and performed with passion and precision.

Born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Bhattacharya has developed an intriguing body of work - ranging



Incantations



Sleight of Hand



Isolated Incidents



Date with Dance



Akshongay

form and seeking to create works that utilize classical vocabulary in a contemporary aesthetic, Bhattacharya began choreographing in 1997. Her choreography has been characterized as "a contemporary expression of the Bharatanatyam form ... and more" (*Vancouver Sun*) and been commissioned by the Canada Dance Festival, Cahoots Theatre Projects, Dusk Dances, Theatre Direct Canada

from full length classical recitals to powerful contemporary solos and duets - that showcases today's Bharatanatyam and Canadian contemporary dance with a South Asian sensibility. Her performances have struck a deep emotional chord with audiences and critics alike, and have been presented by Canada's National Arts Centre, Toronto's Danceworks and Kalanidhi Fine

Arts, Vancouver's Dancing on the Edge, Tokyo's An Creative and at fabrik Potsdam / 17th Potsdamer Tanztag - International Festival of Contemporary Dance.

Through the creation and presentation of powerful humanistic dance works in collaboration with choreographers, composers and visual designers, the company invites audiences to embrace dance for the visceral experience it can offer.

"[Nova Bhattacharya] dances with a kick-ass authority that brings a contemporary edge to classical Indian dance."

- eye Weekly

"Bhattacharya...smoulders... She is a born storyteller and a purveyor of moods, her intense eyes holding the watcher in their grip, while her expressive, compact body radiates emotion."

- The Globe & Mail

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Recent Event

SriLankan Airlines hosts a Dinner Reception for Travel & Tour Agents

SriLankan Airlines Canada hosted a Holiday Dinner Reception for their Travel Agents, Tour Operators and Cargo Agents at the Markham Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites in Toronto on November 20, 2011.

In attendance were over 100 invitees including leading community members and the Ethnic Press. Mr. Karunaratna Paranavithana, Consul General for Sri Lanka in Toronto, Mr. Dillan Ariyawansa, Ajith De Alwis and Shamike Perera of SriLankan North America were also present to grace the occasion.

Mr. Lalith Wickremasinghe, SriLankan Airlines Manager in Canada in his welcoming speech thanked

the guests for their presence and the agents for their unwavering support for SriLankan Airlines over the years and particularly during the challenging times endured by Sri Lanka. Ms. Maria DSouza, Sales Manager, delivered the vote of thanks.

The glittering evening included various performing artistes including a popular Sinhala vocalist Anusha Jayasundara, Tamil Bharata Natyam Dances by Saeetha Pathmanathan, enchanting cha cha and salsa dancing by sisters Kesheni & Nikini Samaranayake and some captivating dancing by the troupe featuring sisters Hashinika & Mihini Molligoda, Shamari Liyanage

and Ruwandha Attygalle.

Guests were treated to a scrumptious dinner followed by some tantalizing music and singing by the music band in attendance, Sampath and the Showcase.

Complementing the Band was Cecil Fernando, an accomplished Trumpeter, Saxophonist and Vocalist who was flown from New York, specifically for the evening. The enthralled guests danced their way well into the evening before calling it a night.

Some pictures of the gala evening can be seen here.



Sathasivam Nagalingam, President-Jet Travels, Nanda Pathmanathan, President-Taprobane Travel and Thiru Mahesan, President-Serandib Travels.



Maria D'Souza, Sales Manager-SriLankan Airlines, Nanda Pathmanathan, President-Taprobane Travel & Nimalan, President-Gemini Tours



Cecil Fernando, Sampath Edirisinghe, Kolitha Jayasekera of Sampath and the Showcase Band



Maria D'Souza, Sales Manager-SriLankan Airlines, Keith Dalgado, Manager-Air Canada, Dillan Ariyawansa-Senior Vice-President USA, Canada & the Caribbean-SriLankan Airlines, Karunaratna Paranavithana, Consul General for Sri Lanka in Toronto, Ajith De Alwis, Manager, Sales & Operations, USA, Canada & Caribbean-SriLankan Airlines, Lalith Wickremesinghe, Manager- SriLankan Airlines Toronto Office



(L-R) J R Arora, President-Airliners, Keith Dalgado, Manager-Air Canada, Sri Subramaniam, President-Air Link Travels, Dillan Ariyawansa-Senior Vice-President USA, Canada & the Caribbean & Lalith Wickremesinghe, Manager- SriLankan Airlines Toronto Office.



Dance performance by Hasinika Molligoda, Mihini Molligoda, Shamari Liyanage, Ruwandha Attygalle



Dance performance by Hasinika Molligoda, Shamari Liyanage, Mihini Molligoda, Ruwandha Attygalle



The Scarborough Hospital

Grateful patient pays 1993 bill – many times over

■ The Scarborough Hospital thankful for generous donation

When Narendra Shah was a patient at The Scarborough Hospital in 1993, he was unable to completely pay his hospital bill, despite having OHIP plus some coverage from his work.

The hospital forgave his outstanding bill of \$640 and today, Narendra is a successful financial planner who never forgot the kindness showed to him by The Scarborough Hospital in those early 'lean' years. Not only did he and his wife, Dipa, make contributions to TSH's Diwali celebration, as well as financial gifts to celebrate their anniversary and Narendra's birthday, the owner of Shah Financial Planners wants to repay that bill, and then some, with a donation to The Scarborough Hospital Foundation.

"I am so glad that I have this opportunity to repay the hospital for their care and treatment, and also to be able to help the hospital purchase new equipment," Narendra says. "Like many people who came here from other countries, I was not aware that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care pays for the operations of the hospital, but that the Foundation raises the money for medical and surgical equipment."

The Shahs are grateful patients, and their donation is a testament to their dedication to TSH and their community. "We really hope that all other grateful patients will make a gift to honour their doctor or nurse like we have done," the Shahs explain.



TSH Foundation President Michael Mazza accepts a donation from Narendra and Dipa Shah.

TSH launches new ED geriatric mental health program

A new program at The Scarborough Hospital's Emergency Departments (EDs) will improve the care of seniors who may have mental health or addiction issues.

The ED-Geriatric Mental Health program (ED-GMH) was launched at the Birchmount and General campuses in late November. It "allows staff to use a different lens to see the geriatric population," says Shirin Vellani, a Geriatric Emergency Management Nurse Practitioner at the General campus.

Since October, medical and clinical staff in the EDs started training on the program's e-learning module, which provides specific clinical and practical knowledge and skills. E-learning components include:

- How to recognize changes in cognition, mood, function and behaviour in seniors;
- A set of standardized assessment tools to screen for the '3Ds' – delirium, dementia and depression;
- A newly designed process and recording form to help staff understand when and how to apply the '3D' tool with a clear definition of roles and responsibilities for each team member; and
- Culturally sensitive strategies for staff to interact

effectively with the hospital's diverse populations in the ED setting.

Santy Thomas, a Registered Nurse at the General campus ED who has completed the e-learning module, finds that she can now "more easily identify elderly patients in the ED who require this sort of care and provide them with the proper treatment."

"These issues are very common for seniors, but can also be easily missed in the ED, so this program will be very beneficial," adds General campus Social Worker Scott Wisner.

"The training put the '3Ds' on my radar and helped me better identify the causes and know what to look for."

"The ED-GMH program has been successfully introduced in the EDs of seven academic hospitals in Toronto and has won an award for excellence at the Ontario Hospital Association's Health Achieve conference," explains Shirin. "We're very proud to be the first hospital in the Central East Local Health Integration Network to implement it."



Geriatric Emergency Management Nurse Practitioner Shirin Vellani speaks with patient J.E. Forsythe as part of The Scarborough Hospital's new Emergency Department Geriatric Mental Health program.

By the end of the year, most physicians, nurses and allied health staff in the both of the hospital's EDs will have completed the ED-GMH e-learning module. After six months of staff using the new program, changes in the diagnosis of mental health and addictions issues will be evaluated.

Ethics in Health Care: Supports for Ethical Decision-making at TSH

Three initiatives that support ethical decision making at The Scarborough Hospital were the subject of a recent presentation at the 2011 Ethics in Health Care Conference.

TSH Clinical ethicist, Moji Adurogbangba and Debbie Driver, Nurse Practitioner and Clinic Lead, Geriatric Assessment and Intervention Network (GAIN) Clinic, shared knowledge with peers about TSH's innovative approaches and exemplary practices that have positively impacted and broadened awareness of healthcare ethics.

The first presentation focused on an initiative that addresses how TSH engages patients and/or Substitute Decision Makers in their healthcare decisions.

"This speaks to patients' and families' access to clinical ethics consultation at TSH and the opportunity to be educated about the clinical, ethical and legal framework in which the Ontario healthcare system operates," Moji says.

TSH's Community Advisory Council was engaged in the development and implementation of the brochure on 'The Role of Substitute Decision-Maker.' The Clinical Ethics program at TSH is a resource not only for staff and physicians, but also for our patients and community when they need assistance making ethical health care decisions that respect their cultural values, and those of their loved ones.

The second initiative was on how the Nurse Practitioner-led Interprofessional Teams in the GAIN clinic encourage seniors to reflect on wishes by initiating discussions about Advance Care Planning and future care needs. The GAIN clinic at TSH was launched in January of 2011, proactively delivering specialized geriatric care to frail seniors, enabling them to stay in the community and avoid unnecessary

visits to the emergency department.

"Our community is interested in having these conversations with us, and with their families," Debbie says. "They eagerly accept assistance and information about resources available to them. Advance Care Planning, Substitute Decision Maker identification and future care wishes discussions are initiated during the comprehensive geriatric assessments conducted in the TSH GAIN Clinic."

Over 400 seniors have attended the TSH GAIN clinic over its first ten months of operations.

A third initiative involved actively taking steps to open conversations about difficult health issues by engaging the community through the ongoing free speakers' series, 'It's Time to Talk.' The session offered in February, 'Tough Transitions: Aging, Families and Eldercare,' promoted:

- Awareness and understanding of Substitute Decision-Maker roles.



Debbie Driver, Clinic Lead in the GAIN Clinic (left) and Moji Adurogbangba, Clinical Ethicist at The Scarborough Hospital, presented at a recent conference on Ethics in Health.

- Planning a Geriatric Future.
- Advance Care Planning.

More than 100 community members and healthcare partners attended the inaugural session.

The presentation at the Ethics in Health Care conference was well received as evidenced by the positive feedback from attendees commending TSH on efforts being made in directly impacting patients and families and engaging the community.

The conference was co-hosted by Accreditation Canada and the University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics.



The Scarborough Hospital

CENTRE ADDRESSES HEALTH, EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF SEXUAL ASSAULT ON MALE VICTIMS

When Everett was six years old, he was placed in the care of Children's Aid. By the time he was nine, he had been shuffled from group home to group home. At one of those group homes, Everett was sexually assaulted by a teenage male over an extended period of time.

Fast-forward 26 years, and Everett is in treatment for alcohol abuse, charged with domestic violence and has a six-year old son.

"I'm tired and I really need to change things," he told Social Worker Tatjana Singer when he was first referred to The Scarborough Hospital's Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care Centre. After ten sessions, Everett (not his real name) feels he is getting the help he needs "to face my demons. I feel better and stronger for facing them."

"At first, reaching out was hard. I didn't know where to go and I was worried I'd be judged," Everett says. "Maybe I would have sought help sooner, but I don't know. Back then, I didn't know services for me existed. I do know that when I did reach out, I was ready."

One in four females will have experienced a sexual assault by the age of 18. The number of males who have also experienced a sexual assault is lower – one in six – but it is generally understood that sexual assaults are under-reported for both males and females.

"We offer 12 sessions of one-on-one counselling to sexual assault victims, as well as medical intervention with a clinical nurse on the team in case there are any concerns of STDs," Tatjana explains. "We connect them to other services in the community, to transition them if they need additional help."

Sexual assault victims find their way to the centre one of two ways: through the Emergency Department because they've been assaulted within the past 72 hours, or they have been referred to the Centre through the legal system, a family physician, guidance counsellor or find the information online.

"It's not only clients who have a history of sexual abuse, but also recent victims who realize that, 'hey, this doesn't just happen to me,'" Tatjana explains.

"Throughout the community stream referral, we see victims who have had that experience within the past two years, and may be ambivalent about counselling," explains Social Worker Rahel-Leigh Peckett. "Then something comes

on the news – the sex abuse scandal at Penn State last fall, for example – and victims think that maybe it's time to reach out. We generally see a spike in male clients after such an event. There is that window of opportunity for them."

Once they engage in counselling, the Centre – which serves both men and women 12 years and older – provides therapeutic intervention that includes psycho-education to highlight they are not alone. While the therapy approach is similar for both genders, male clients have a tougher time dealing with it.

"I think there's an extra layer of stigma for male clients in getting help and talking about it," Rahel-Leigh explains. "Anecdotally, in my own experience working with males, most have been assaulted or abused by other males, so there's that extra question: how does this affect my sexuality? What does it mean about my sexual orientation?"

"And due to male socialization – they're raised not to cry and should be able to protect themselves – our approach in providing therapy differs," Tatjana adds. "We have these hurdles to address early on. I also noticed male clients tend to 'act out' more. They're not just dealing with the impact of sexual assault, but many are dealing with an addiction issue or a mental health issue. Those cases tend to be more complex."

Indeed, depression, alcoholism and drug addiction are common side effects of sexual assault. And since males are less likely to come forward or take longer to come forward, "there's time for a greater impact on other areas of their health and functioning."

"If someone comes to Emerg, we can immediately prevent symptoms from developing into other illnesses like post-traumatic stress disorder, or before it gets to depression,



Rahel-Leigh Peckett, a Social Worker with The Scarborough Hospital's Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Care Centre, counsels a male sex assault client.

before the anxiety gets too great," Rahel-Leigh says. "Since it's harder for men to come forward sooner, it may take years for them to get counselling and by then, alcohol might be their way to cope, high blood pressure sets in or maybe their anger comes out leading to relationship dysfunction and trouble with the law."

The Centre tries to create a safe environment regardless of who walks through their door, "and part of that safety comes from us having a real understanding of what it means for someone to be sexually assaulted," Tatjana says.

"We do a lot of education in the schools, talking to young people about how to protect themselves, where to go for help," Rahel-Leigh says. "Our hope is that this boy sitting in the audience can feel safe and come forward."

For Everett, the Centre has set him back on the long road to recovery and healing. "My advice to others is, 'don't let the abuse control your life anymore,'" Everett says.

TSH WINS AWARD FOR 'GREEN' INITIATIVES IN THE OR

The Scarborough Hospital is being lauded as a leader in demonstrating a serious commitment to going green and using reusable textiles in the operating room.

Last October, TSH was one of five hospitals in Ontario to be awarded a Booth Centennial Green Award for its increased use of reusable OR products and willingness to participate in innovative green OR solutions.

"We are striving to find the right balance between reusable and disposable products, and we have introduced textile OR gowns to reduce waste," explains Nurallah Rahim, Patient Care Director, Surgical Services, Ortho & Rehab at TSH. "When we became aware of just how much garbage the OR produces, we took a serious look at how to reduce waste and become more environmentally conscious."

The first step was to introduce reusable textile surgical gowns that provide less static and less strike-through of fluids. Newer textile weaves and blends now available are far more efficient barriers to fluids than the old cotton and linen gowns of decades ago.

"Disposable paper gowns were introduced several years ago to replace cotton and linen, but it's almost a 360 degree turn back to textile," Nurallah explains. "The modern textiles are far more efficient, though, and will help us reduce what we send to the landfills."

The cost of textile gowns is comparable to disposable paper gowns, and once you take into consideration a cost analysis of how much TSH will save in garbage removal/disposal, the scales tip even further in favour of reusable textiles.

"As we move more towards endoscopic surgeries, where there is less blood and fluids, textile gowns will become increasingly cost-effective," Nurallah explains. "While surgeons may need to wear a disposable gown as they're right next to the patient, a scrub nurse can wear a textile gown. The used gowns are cleaned and sterilized and put back into the system, saving considerable waste. "Being recognized by Booth Centennial makes us feel proud that we're environmentally conscious and that TSH – one of the largest community hospitals in the GTA – is moving in the right direction," Nurallah adds. "This is a huge step forward, another recognition that TSH is a leader in integrity and accountability."

The Scarborough Hospital was recently awarded a Booth Centennial Green Award for its environmental initiatives in the Operating Room. Nurallah Rahim, Patient Care Director, Surgical Services, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation (right) and Judy To, Operating Room Staff Nurse, display the reusable textile gowns now in use at TSH.



'Thank your doctor and nurse' Fundraising Program at The Scarborough Hospital

The Scarborough Hospital recently launched an easy-to-give 'thank you' program at both campuses and seven satellite sites. The brochures are printed in English, Chinese and Tamil to reflect the top three languages spoken by patients in the hospital.

Located throughout both campuses, these brochures are available to those who wish to honour physicians or staff members for the care they received.

"Many people ask us how they can give back and say thank you. This is an easy system to use – you can drop off the brochure before leaving the hospital, or you can mail it right in the brochure as it includes an easy to use envelope," says Krishni Loganathan, coordinator of the program for The Scarborough Hospital Foundation and TSH.

The Scarborough Hospital Foundation, the fundraising arm of TSH, strives to raise money for urgently needed medical equipment. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care provides funding for all operations of the hospital like salaries and medications, but new equipment and upgrading hospital buildings come through the fundraising efforts of the Foundation.

"Many people buy candy for nurses and offer to purchase

pizza but really, what we need is new equipment and updated facilities to meet the needs of our community. If everyone who wanted to say thanks to their doctor or nurse did it with a \$25 donation, we could easily have the best possible equipment to serve our patients," says Dr. John Wright, CEO and President of TSH, who recently presented certificates to the physicians and staff that have been honoured by 'grateful patients' at the campaign's launch.

More than \$6 million is needed each year to purchase new equipment and this all must be funded through patient and community donations. TSH serves more than 25 distinct ethnic groups and more than 650,000 people who speak approximately 100 different languages. Over 450,000 patients come through the doors of this acute care hospital every year to for cancer care, to deliver their babies or to have surgery.

With the help of donations from those who use and rely on the hospital, new equipment can be purchased to help diagnose disease faster, ease treatment and provide better options for patients. Making a donation is the best way for patients and their family members to say thank you and help save lives.



The Scarborough Hospital

FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENT BRINGS GLOBAL HEALTH SPECIALTY TO HIS PRACTICE

A medical degree in global health is a rare specialty, one that TSH family medicine resident Dr. Alan Goldman is finding very useful in treating Scarborough residents.

"It's amazing to have this background in international health, and especially to be able to put it to good use in such a culturally diverse community," explains Dr. Goldman, who recently started his two-year residency at TSH and has always had a "passion" for global health issues.

Born and raised in the Toronto area, Dr. Goldman recalls doing a project in Grade 10 on cardiac transplantation, "and I thought it was the coolest thing I've ever seen."

"Medicine was at the back of my mind going forward ever since. Even as I explored other career options, it always came back to medicine," he says.

While attending York University during his undergraduate years, Dr. Goldman had the opportunity to travel, teaching English in China and participating in earthquake relief in El Salvador.

"I realized I had a strong interest in various cultures, and wanted to combine that with medicine, so I finished by Undergraduate degree and went for my Masters in international health," he says.

He remained at York University where his Masters' thesis, 'Ugandan Youth: Attitudes, Knowledge and Behaviour Regarding HIV Prevention,' was followed by two published manuscripts, both of which examine vaccine preparedness in sub-Saharan Africa. He subsequently attended the Medical School for International

Health in Israel, a specialized medical school that incorporates global health coursework into all four years of the curriculum. As a first-year medical student, Dr. Goldman worked on a study comparing the rates of adherence to anticoagulant therapy in Bedouin and Jewish populations in the south of Israel. In his fourth year, he completed a study on 'Preventative Health Behaviours By Time-Since Immigration to Canada.'

"Global health is very important to me, and as such, I try to build it into my career," Dr. Goldman says. "Working at The Scarborough Hospital helps to fulfill that need as I have so much opportunity to interact with different cultures."

Dr. Goldman says his young family is settling into Scarborough quite nicely.

"When we moved here, we knew very little about the community," he adds. "Scarborough is amazing. We feel right at home in one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world."

Helpful tips for new dialysis patients

Patients diagnosed with kidney failure – where kidney functions drop below 15 per cent – have two choices for survival: dialysis treatments or kidney transplants.

Dialysis is a process for removing waste and excess water from the blood, and is used primarily as an artificial replacement for lost kidney function in people with renal failure. The Scarborough Hospital's Chronic Kidney Disease Program is one of the largest in North America, treating more than 5,000 patients with kidney disease and another 750 dialysis patients.

Diabetes is the most common cause of kidney disease. High blood glucose levels and high blood pressure can damage the kidneys over time. But for long-time dialysis patient Terri Bradshaw, diabetes was not the diagnosis that turned her life upside down 10 years ago.

"It was glomerulonephritis, which is not diabetes-related," Terri says. "When I was first diagnosed, I was in denial until I became so sick, I had no objections to going on dialysis because I just wanted to feel better."

"I won't deny that dialysis is very invasive, and there is pain involved," explains Terri, who is Chair of the Home Dialysis Peer Support Group at The Scarborough Hospital. "You really don't understand what it means until it happens to you, but I always tell people that it beats the alternative."

For newly diagnosed patients needing to start dialysis, Terri offers the following advice:

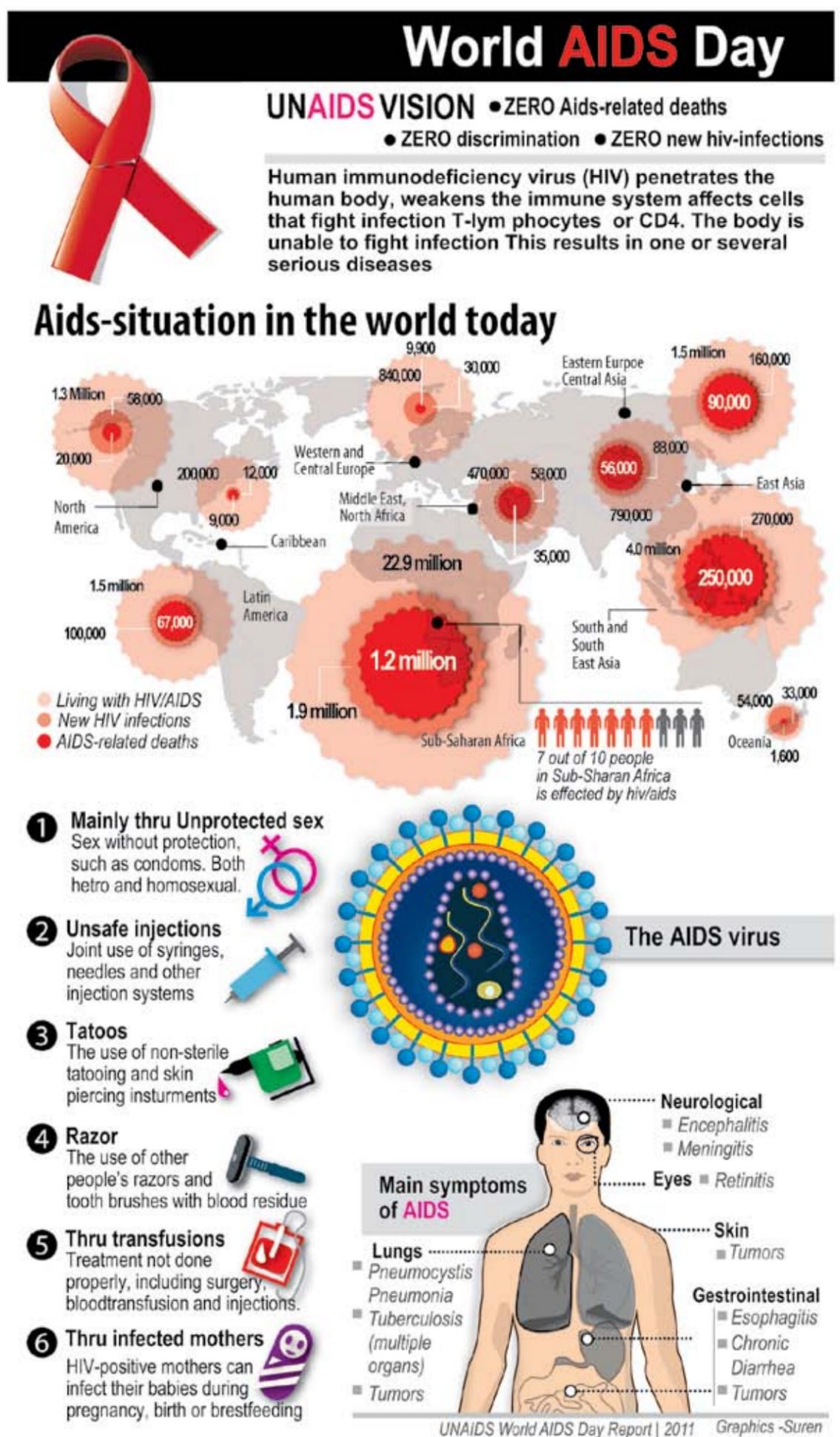
1. Gather as much information as possible provided by doctors and nurses, and review it at home with someone you trust who will help you. Go over it together in a quiet environment that's less stressful because you can't possibly absorb all that information in the doctor's office.

2. Write out questions for your medical appointments even if they seem silly. Quite often during appointments, your discussion with the doctor takes another track. Keep a log of your questions and answers, because when you're sick, it may be hard to remember everything. Better yet, take someone with you to your appointment.

3. Don't allow yourself to be intimidated by healthcare professionals. Be prepared for your appointments and be your own advocate. Be involved, be in charge, and take an interest in your treatment.

4. Take advantage of any non-clinical information or support, such as a peer support group, touring the facility, watching the dialysis machines in action and talking to other patients.

5. And the most important and probably the hardest thing is to stay positive, even when don't feel good. Without a positive outlook, it's very easy to slip into black hole of depression.





Recent Event

Century 21 Innovative Realty opens branch in Mississauga

Sameem Mohamed, Broker of Record of Century 21 Innovative Realty along with their staff celebrated the Grand opening of their branch office in Mississauga on Saturday, Nov 12th.

Many Realtors, clients, friends and well wishers attended the grand opening and wished Sameem and his new team for success in their venture.

Raghbir Chauhan, Broker/Manager of the branch office along with Sameem greeted everyone and thanked for their participation in the grand opening.

The main office is in Scarborough located at Markham & Finch and branch office is in Mississauga located at 1001 Meyerside Dr off Dixie Road just north of 401.



Seen here are some pictures taken at the grand opening.>>



Seniors Gala at Shri Ram Mandir

Every year Shri Ram Mandir celebrates senior's day in a big way with musical gala and dinner. This year's event, open to people 60 years and over, proved to be extremely popular with all available seats initially allocated being booked out within days and regrettably some seniors could not be accommodated due to limited seating capacity.

course 15-dish variety dinner.

Later Pt Roopnauth Sharma along with Bob Delaney, MPP and Dipika Dameria, MMP Ontario, presented certificates on behalf of Premier McGuinty, Govt of Ontario to various seniors who completed their wedding anniversary shown in brackets here. The proud recipients were Kanayalal and Bindu Raina (39), Hira and Kumad Aggarwal

Dev 80, Balbir Bhutani 80, Ambadas Aysola 81, Irene Ramgahan 81, Batilal Chotalia 84, Ramdeo Bridgemohan 85 and Bhim Talwar 85, all were complimented and presented with certificates on completion of birthdays. Besides Bob Delaney, Dipika Dameria MMP and Bonnie Cromie Councilor from ward 5 were present on this occasion to wish seniors a very happy and prosperous future.

warmth accompanies them.

Happier, no matter what

People, as various studies show, behave differently at different ages. Older people have fewer rows and come up with better solutions to conflict. They are better at controlling their emotions, better at accepting misfortune and less prone to anger. In one study, for instance, I know, subjects



65 year Horace Maharaj with his wife around him, celebrated his birthday on this occasion

This was 3rd such celebration when over 325 seniors participated in this grand senior gala function. On this occasion, Pandit Roopnauth Sharma the spiritual leader of Shri Ram Mandir welcomed all the seniors and acknowledged their ongoing contributions to family, workplaces and communities. This exclusive event was full of live performances and entertainment from our musicians and singers, who wowed the audience with their amazing songs and the solo tabla play. The seniors were served with a delicious four-

(40), Chitra and A Muzumdhara (40), Ramesh and Vasath Bhati (41), Balbir and Prabha Bhutani (42), Jayantilal and Kusm Panchal (42), Ratilal and Jaya Chotalia (45), Braja and Kabita Das (45), Ranvir and Rekha Chawla (47), Ravinder and Tripta Parmar (47), Harihar and Ashima Dey (51), Seth and Ashok Swaran (52), Ramdayal and Koontie (54), Ramdeo and Ramdeo Bridgemohan (61).

Those who completed their birthdays in this year and still going strong were Bharat

65 year Horace Maharaj with his wife around him, celebrated on this occasion his birthday with much pomp and show and they looked resplendent, and could not stop smiling, while cutting the birthday cake.

The function was appreciated by everyone. Everyone had a praise, the way the whole function was organized which was supported by a team of over 125 MRM dedicated volunteers from Shri Ram Mandir. This function could not have achieved the objection without the support from our dedicated volunteers.

Indeed, the evening of life is as much a state of mind as it is a state of being. There are those seniors who never seem to retire even years after they have actually done so. They are never morose, come what may. They choose to whistle their way through life, and continue to do so even when it is time for the curtain to come down. When it is finally time for them to go, they do so in a blaze of glory. A glow of goodwill and



Dr. Kanayalal Raina and his wife receiving 39th wedding anniversary certificate from Bob Delaney MPP.

were asked to listen to recordings of people supposedly saying disparaging things about them. Older and younger people were similarly saddened, but older people less angry and less inclined to pass judgment, taking the view, as one put it, that "you can't please all the people all the time."

Dr. Kanayalal Raina

Recent Event



CanTYD's Awards of Excellence Gala Recognizes Exceptional Tamil-Canadian Youth Achievement

On October 30, 2011 the Canadian Tamil Youth Development Centre (CanTYD) hosted its 12th Annual Awards of Excellence gala. The night recognized Tamil-Canadian students who have achieved excellence in academics, athletics, the arts, and community service.

The gala was hosted at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto in Scarborough. The reception began at 5:30 pm and was followed by the Awards of Excellence programme at 6:30 pm.

The evening showcased several dance and drama performances by CanTYD's Medai Konal team. The keynote speaker was Kesavan Balasingham, a prominent pastor who spoke of a tragic occurrence in his life and his inspiring turnaround. Also speaking were Mark Beckles, Regional Vice-President of RBC, and Kumaran Arul of TD Bank Financial Group. Both speakers emphasized the commitment of their organizations to community youth development.

Awards were distributed to thirteen exceptional students for Academic Achievement, Athletic Achievement, Overall Achievement, Outstanding Community Contribution, and Performing Arts. Plaques and scholarships were distributed to the award winners as their achievements were acknowledged on stage. All Grade 12 award recipients received a \$1000 scholarship towards their university studies.

CanTYD is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth empowerment in the Tamil community. In February 1998, 17 Tamil-Canadian students and graduates formed CanTYD in the wake of growing youth violence in the community. CanTYD has since evolved to an active community organization of 9 staff, 150 volunteers, 500

young participants, outreach in 5 high schools, and has made a difference in the lives of many youth across the GTA.

CanTYD wishes to thank RBC, TD Bank Financial Group, The Co-operators and Peter Connelly, LLB, for their gracious long-standing support.

As of 2011, CanTYD has awarded over \$100,000 in scholarships.

2011 Award Recipients:

- Aparna Yogaselvam - Performing Arts (\$1000 Scholarship)
- Kirthika Umasuthan - Outstanding Community Contribution (\$1000 Scholarship)
- Athithan Karunakaran - Grade 9 Academic Achievement
- Thenuka Thanabalasingam - Grade 10 Academic Achievement
- Piravena Selvakumar - Grade 11 Academic Achievement & Overall Achievement
- Anuisa Ranjan - Grade 12 Academic Achievement (\$1000 Scholarship)
- Rammya Ilankannan - Grade 9 Overall Achievement
- Viethushaa Mohandas - Grade 10 Overall Achievement
- Danitha Kanagavaratha - Grade 12 Overall Achievement (\$1000 Scholarship)
- Abirami Shanmugaratnam - Athletic Achievement (\$1000 Scholarship)
- Krishanth Manokaran - Athletic Achievement (\$1000 Scholarship)
- Gerosshanth Satkunam - Most Improved Student (\$1000 Scholarship)
- Steevan Sritharan - Most Improved Student (\$1000 Scholarship)

For more information please visit www.cantyd.org

Photo Credit: Nitharsan Chandrakumar





Recent Event

The 23rd Annual Hartley Nite

The Hartley College Past Pupils Association Canada/USA branch held its annual general meeting and get together, known as "Hartley Nite" on the 12th of November 2011 at the La Gondala Banquet Hall in Concord, Ontario. Attended by around 150 past students, well wishers and their families, the 23rd annual Hartley Nite marked the end of yet another successful year and the dawn of an exciting year for the Association.

Schools from the war torn Northern Sri Lanka are supported very well by their past pupils, who form past pupils Associations involuntarily in places they live. These not-for profit Associations provide extensive support to their respective schools.

The Hartley College Past Pupils' Associations have been actively pursuing initiatives to support the school in various ways since their inception. Formed in 1988 by socially responsible individuals, HCPPA Canada/USA has grown leaps and bounds and as of today has 225 life members. During this time the Association has collected close to seventy thousand Canadian dollars from members, well-wishers and through various fundraising events for the benefit of the school and other worthy humanitarian

causes. As part of many initiatives of the Association, we host our annual general meeting and get together to facilitate fellowship among Hartleyites living in Canada and USA. This year's event was the 23rd such occasion.

Dr. Shan Shanmugavadivel, the vice-chairman/president-elect of the Canadian Medical Dental Development Association and the first ever dentist from Srilanka descent to be licensed as a dentist in Canada, graced the occasion as the guest of honour. Dr. Shan, a graduate of University of Ceylon, Peradeniya, Srilanka, served as the president (he held this post for three years), vice president and executive member of the HCPPA Canada/USA.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was presided over by Mr. R. Rajeswaran, the current president of the Association. Secretary of the Association Mr. A. Rabikanth and the Treasurer of the Association Mr. N. Navaneethan presented their respective annual reports. The election of the new executive committee was conducted by Mr. V. Eeswaranathan, one of the vice-patrons of the Association. Most members of the 2010/11 executive committee were re-elected unanimously. Mr. R. Rajeswaran

was re-elected as the president for a second consecutive term.

After the AGM, the annual Hartley Nite took place. Re-elected President Mr. R. Rajeswaran thanked the Association, patrons and executive committee for giving him the opportunity to serve as the president of the Association and expressed pride about the achievements of the Association, a sentiment echoed by all members.

Dr. Shan in his address expressed his delight in extending his greetings to everyone who attended the Hartley Nite. "This is an occasion Hartleyites in Canada and USA look forward, to meet their friends and families and cherish our past memories. This is a fine reflection of dedication, optimism and solidarity among the members of HCPPA Canada/USA", added Dr. Shan.

Mr. R. Blanchard, a veteran staff of Hartley College who has served Hartley for more than 20 years, a life member and an ardent supporter of the Association was honoured by Mr. M. Ananthakrishnan on behalf of the Association and Dr. Eswara who was at the event from New York was requested to present the plaque.

This was also an occasion when 6 new

life members of the Association were introduced to the rest of the attendees. This is a new initiative that was warmly appreciated by the fellow Hartleyites.

The last part of the Hartley Nite was the fellowship and entertainment for Hartleyites and families. Hosted by Ms. Vijitha Mylvaganam of Super Singer and CMR fame, this portion of the event was thoroughly entertaining. There were performances resembling professional light music concerts from members, guests and Ms. Mylvaganam herself.

Then two eye-catching dance performances choreographed by Latin Productions, entertained each and everyone. Games for kids and adults kept the crowd engaged all the way through the night. The event came to a happy conclusion with the distribution of prizes for the winners of the games. As they say, faces do tell you many stories. The satisfaction we saw on the happy faces of the attendees did tell us, the members of the executive committee, that, the 23rd Annual Hartley Nite was a grand success.

Seen here are some photos taken at the event.

Photo Courtesy:
www.Ninaivukal.com



President Mr. Raj Rajeswaran



Guest of Honour
Dr. Shan Shanmugavadivel



Vice Patron Mr. V. Eeswaranathan



Veteran staff of Hartley College
Mr. R. Blanchard



Past President and Committee
member Mr. V. Vijenthira



Committee members for 2011/2012



Dr. Eswara from New York presenting the plaque to Mr. R. Blanchard. Mrs. Blanchard is seated next to him



Vice President Mr. Vel Vivekanathan

Recent Event



St. John's – Chudikuli Alumni Association Annual Dinner Dance

It was another breath taking, exhilarating and jubilant dinner dance that the St John's – Chudikuli Alumni Association put together on November 12, 2011 at J&J Swagat Banquet Hall with a live band provided by the Beatniks, DJ Music and a luscious dinner platter. The dinner dance provided a wonderful platform to meet with friends of old and new and have a joyful and fun evening talking and reminiscing on our past and catching up on the present, dancing to the old and new songs and not forgetting the infamous Baila music and enjoying the most delicious food. The evening was memorable for all who attended.

For those who missed it the message is to come and join us next year.

In enjoying the evening we also remembered our routes from where we began our journey of knowledge. We remembered fondly the friendship that we built at our colleges, the teachers who taught us and reminded ourselves to take affirmative action to support our colleges so that the excellence of education can continue to flourish and the colleges can maintain their presence in the community and the province as a bastion and shining light to assist the future generations so they too can tell the story.

Next year (2012) will be 25 years since the first pioneers of the colleges formed the Alumni Association in Toronto and we will be planning a special AGM to celebrate this milestone. Please make a note and join us.

Deva Nalliah & Eileen Chinniah
Co-Chairs

Seen here are some photos taken at the event





Recent Event

AUSPICIOUS DATE BRINGS GIFTS TO NEWBORNS AT ETOBICOKE GENERAL HOSPITAL AND OSLER FOUNDATION

To mark the unique date of November 11, 2011, Kipling Plaza merchants put together gifts for babies born that date at Etobicoke General Hospital (EGH). In addition to the gifts, the Plaza's owner pledged \$100 to the Foundation for each baby born on that date at EGH. Twelve babies were born at EGH that day.

"The generosity of local companies in pledging funds to support our community hospitals is important to the William Osler Health System Foundation. These fundraising activities support how the foundation raises funds for William Osler Health System's capital, education and research priorities at Etobicoke General Hospital, Brampton Civic Hospital and Peel Memorial Centre for Integrated Health & Wellness (opening in 2015)," states Anne Randell, President & CEO, William Osler Health System Foundation.

"The new mothers enjoyed receiving the gifts and we had fun delivering them," stated Rita Ola-Adigun,



Etobicoke General Hospital

(Registered Nurse, Maternal Newborn Etobicoke General Hospital.

Kipling Plaza retailers donated goods to fill a gift basket for every baby born throughout the day at EGH. Kipling Plaza owner Jerry Faivish delivered the gifts with the help of Osler Foundation staff to the new mothers at Etobicoke General Hospital.

About William Osler Health System

William Osler Health System is home to Canada's premier community hospitals – Brampton Civic, Etobicoke General and Peel Memorial (under redevelopment) – and serves the 1.3 million residents of the communities of Brampton, Etobicoke, Malton, Caledon and surrounding areas. Our vision is to design health systems that serve the global community... driven by diversity. Osler treats more than 620,000 patients and their families every year; 170,000 in the emergency departments alone.

Evening in Paris Gala raises \$200,000

Funds will go to the Surgical Services Program at Brampton Civic Hospital

November 10, 2011, Brampton – The annual William Osler Health System Foundation Gala raised \$200,000 for surgical equipment at Brampton Civic Hospital last week.

The event, themed an Evening in Paris, included a silent and a live auction, a Parisian inspired meal by renowned Chef Christopher Woods and great music. Award-winning journalist Tom Hayes acted as Master of Ceremonies for the 275 guests in attendance.

"The Foundation plays an important role in raising funds for capital and equipment needs of the William Osler Health System. There are a number of events and activities undertaken in their fundraising efforts and we are grateful for the tremendous support we get from the community through the Foundation from events and donations," explains Kay Blair, Board Chair, William Osler Health System.

"The community will be hearing more from us as we continue to seek their support for redevelopment of Peel Memorial and Etobicoke General Hospitals and the ongoing equipment needs for the many programs and services offered to the community through these vital facilities," states Kulvir Singh Gill, Board Chair, William Osler Health System Foundation.

"I know these funds are earmarked for some of the top wish list items in the surgery area – another anaesthesia machine, a new Operating Room Table or a High Definition Video Tower that is used for projecting video images like x-rays for surgeons to view during surgery. We are blessed to have such amazing technology to aid our surgeons and we are doubly blessed to have generous members of our community that want to see the best technology and programs in their local community hospital for their family, friends and neighbours to access," states Anne Randell, President and CEO, William Osler Health System Foundation.



Left to Right: Anne Randell, President and CEO, William Osler Health System Foundation, Kulvir Singh Gill, Board Chair, William Osler Health System Foundation and Kay Blair, Board Chair, William Osler Health System were among the 275 guests attending the Evening in Paris Gala, November 4.

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Recent Event



TamilOne TV celebrates 6th Anniversary

TamilOne TV, one of the popular Tamil entertainment channels in Canada celebrated their success by inviting their clients and friends and dignitaries at an event on Nov 13th.

TamilOne TV programmes cater to the distinctive Tamil culture, and has been making variety of programs including live programming, music shows, political features, movies and dramas as well as teen and kids shows.

The Anniversary event was very colorful and guests were treated to fine entertainment in the form of traditional dancing & music. The guests were also entertained to a sumptuous dinner.

Hon Brad Duguid, MPP (Scarborough Centre), Minister of Economic Development and Innovation Bas Balkissoon, MPP (Scarborough-Rouge River) were some of the dignitaries attended the event. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty also sent a video greeting and it was shown on the screen.

The talent behind the success of TamilOne were introduced with their profiles on the big screen, starting with

Sri Vaithilingam, President & CEO who is also key technical architect of TamilOne. Others were Shan Arunasalam, Senior Member, Siva Mathiaparanam, Advisor, Samy Appadurai, Consultant, Mayuran Maheswaran (Kannan), Executive Director, Sathi Bageerathan, Director of Sales, Prashanth Nagularajah, Marketing Manager, Sathiya Bavan, Production Manager, Akilan Ratnam, Account Keeper, Navaneetha Navaratnam, TV Host, Gowry Bavanathan, News Producer, Nirosha Suthesan, Sales Coordinator, Tharani Naguleswaran, Master Control Room, Prem Subramaniam, Cameraman, Balaji Anbazhagan, Creative Head, Roshitha Spauling, Associate Producer, Guna Rajkumar, Master Control, Channel Punjabi, Shanthini Visuwanathan, Office Administrator, and many other Newscasters.

Seen here are some pictures taken at the event.

Courtesy: www.Ninaivukal.com





Cinema World

Kareena Kapoor is the sexiest Asian woman

Bollywood actress Kareena Kapoor has emerged as the sexiest Asian woman in the world, according to a survey.

Eastern Eye, a weekly, conducted a survey through social networking sites like Twitter and Kareena came out on top, edging out last year's winner Katrina Kaif.

Kareena, who recently gave hits like Bodyguard and Ra.One, won by 1% of votes, the narrowest ever margin and beat off tough competition from some of the most stunning women from around the world.

Katrina, who had won the title for the last three years by a large margin, slipped into second place.

Eastern Eye showbiz editor Asjad Nazir said, "This battle between the two beauties is a sign of things to come in Bollywood in the next few years. Although the list contained pop stars, TV personalities, models and film stars from around the world, the voting

quite comprehensively showed that Kareena and Katrina have put a distance between themselves and the rest of the contenders in terms of popularity."

Hrithik Roshan's wife Sussanne received a massive number of votes and was one of the highest new entries at number 16. Other notable stars in the list included Priyanka Chopra (3), and Bipasha Basu (4), who both slipped down one place each. Freida Pinto came 5th, followed by Deepika Padukone (7).

New entries included Jacqueline Fernandez (12), Nargis Fakhri (23) and Sonakshi Sinha (38). Aishwarya Rai Bachchan came 6th and Sonam Kapoor 9th. Lara Dutta stood at number 15 and Malaika Arora Khan at 19. - PTI



Baby girl looks just like Aishwarya, says Big B

Proud grandfather Amitabh Bachchan, who brought home daughter-in-law Aishwarya and her baby on Tuesday, Nov 22nd said the newborn looks like her actress mother and will be given a name soon.

The 38-year-old actress was admitted to hospital on November 14 and gave birth to the ninth Bachchan two days later.

"Aishwarya had a normal delivery. She was firm on having so, despite being in acute labour for three hours. Aishwarya and the baby were brought home today. Both are doing well," senior Bachchan, 69, told reporters in their first media interaction since the birth of the baby.

"We first went to 'Prateeksha' as that is our first home. We took the blessings of my late parents and brought them to 'Jalsa' (another house of the Bachchans). We are happy that 'Laxmi' has come to our house," a beaming Bachchan said. When asked about the baby's looks, Big B said, "I feel the baby has entirely gone on Aishwarya. She looks just like her... eyes and all. Some family members feel the baby's face bears some resemblance to Abhishek."

Proud papa Abhishek, who was accompanying Big B, said "the baby is very nice and obedient... she does not cry and bother us much."

The family is yet to decide on a name for the child, but Bachchan said no naming ceremony is planned.

"Aishwarya and Abhishek both want that the baby's name should begin with A. We will decide on it in a few days and post it on Twitter," said Bachchan.

Abhishek, 35, joined in, saying, "My grandfather believed that finding a name is enough so we have never had naming

ceremonies."

The new father also said that the feeling of being a parent is yet to sink in.

Aishwarya also made an appearance after the press conference. "She is very tired but happy and excited at the same time," said her husband.

Wearing an off white salwar kameez, Aishwarya posed for shutterbugs with husband Abhishek.

"Jaya (grandmother) is also very happy and she is taking care of the baby and the mother," Bachchan said.

Abhishek said he would resume work shortly.

When Big B said he is "jobless" now that the game show 'Kaun Banega Crorepati' is over, Abhishek chipped in, "No, he is not jobless, he is on the duty of taking care of his granddaughter."

Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan has left his online fans disappointed by announcing on Nov. 21 that he wouldn't be sharing photographs of his granddaughter as they are too personal.

The 69-year-old superstar's daughter-in-law, actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, gave birth to her first child with husband Abhishek Bachchan Nov. 16 and ever since the family has been flooded with requests from curious fans to see what the newborn looks like.

While Bachchan has been very forthcoming with details surrounding the child's birth, he has said that he won't be sharing pictures of the little one.

"Many (fans) asking for the picture of the baby. I am afraid that is not going to happen. (It's) too personal. You will understand," Bachchan tweeted.



Grandpa B with baby girl on Nov 22, leaving the hospital

He also said that pictures of his granddaughter that have been posted on the Internet are morphed. "Many morphed pictures of the little one with her mother in the hospital (are) doing the rounds on the Internet. All fake," he wrote. - PTI

Dhanush's 'Kolaveri di' song a craze online

'Kolaveri di', a song from the upcoming Tamil movie 3, sung by popular Tamil movie star Dhanush has become an internet rage.

The promo of the song, which was released on November 16, became an instant hit on social networking sites for its quirky 'Tanglish' (Tamil-English) lyrics. The promo features the actor-playback singer Dhanush, son-in-law of superstar Rajinikanth, singing the song in a studio, and composer Anirudh at the piano, while wife & the director Aishwarya Rajinikanth and co-star Shruti Hassan watch along and give suggestions.

"Why this kolaveri di. 24 hours 83,000 you tube views. Thank you guys. For making it the most viewed you tube video in music category on Nov 22. God bless," Dhanush tweeted on the day of the release of the song.

The song Kolaveri appeared as the number one Indian trend on Twitter on November 21. The lyrics of the peppy song are simple and since it is a live recording, Dhanush keeps firing instructions while singing, making it more endearing.

"yo boys I am singing song soup song flop song why this kolaveri kolaveri kolaveri di why this kolaveri kolaveri kolaveri di rhythm correct why this kolaveri kolaveri kolaveri di maintain this why this kolaveri..di.." goes the song.



Mega star Amitabh Bachchan too has been smitten by the foot-tapping music and the crazy lyrics of Dhanush starrer 'Kolaveri Di'.

Bachchan, 69, took to his Twitter account to congratulate the actor on the song which has garnered 14 lakh views on Youtube. "Just heard 'Kolaveri di' after much talk on it ... its so original and catchy ..congrats Dhanush and Aishwarya (Rajni's daughter) .. love," Bachchan posted. - PTI

Language barrier keeping regional films away from us: Bollywood

New age filmmakers and stars from the Bollywood recently said that they were not into the habit of watching regional films as most of them do not come with subtitles.

"I can't watch Marathi film in the absence of sub-titles. I don't want to waste time watching a film I don't understand. I must say I am guilty of not watching non-Bollywood Indian films," director Zoya Akhtar said during a 'knowledge session' at Film Bazaar of IFFI on Nov 25th.

Actor Abhay Deol, who has made a name for himself with films like Dev D and Road Movie, said, "I don't watch Punjabi movies. My Punjabi is also not that good."

Deol, who has worked with Akhtar in her film Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, said that the sub-titling could help fetch more audience to regional cinema.

Kalki Koechlin, Indian actor with French descent, however, said that Anurag Kashyap (her husband) drags her to see Marathi films.

Referring to Marathi movie Gandh, she said that the film was really excellent and she liked it. "I really enjoyed watching Marathi films. It is something that should be more accessible," she added.

The issue of new generation filmmakers watching regional films was raised during the Knowledge Session by one of the audience. IFFI 2011, held in Goa from November 23 to December 3 with 350 films screened. Film Bazaar is the concept by National Films Division Corporation (NFDC), which is a business to business platform for the filmmakers and buyers. - PTI



Bollywood actress Tisca Chopra of Taare Zameen Par fame at the 39th Int'l Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Panaji.

JOHN BODDY HOMES PRESENTS 'EAGLE GLEN'

John Boddy Homes has been voted 'Best Builder' in Ajax/Pickering for the fifteenth year in a row for this year's Readers' Choice Awards and has released its next phase at their 'Eagle Glen' community in Ajax. Located just minutes east of Toronto 'Eagle Glen' combines the closeness and convenience of city living with a suburban feel, and its prime location makes it a great place to call home. Classic two-storey homes are available, as well as side and back splits. Homes start at 2,553 square feet and range up to a spacious 3,534 square feet. John Boddy Homes offers traditional size lots with a minimum of 105 feet in depth and a great selection of extra deep lots, pie shaped lots and walk out basements. With such a broad range of house sizes and styles 'Eagle Glen' has the ideal home to suit every preference. From the unique exteriors and charming streetscapes to the elegant interiors, various John Boddy Homes include such impressive standard features as vaulted ceilings, double door entries, décor columns, mirrored sliding closet doors, ceramic kitchen backsplashes, double basin bathroom vanities with make-up counters and so much more. Their gourmet kitchens, welcoming great rooms with cozy gas fireplaces and elegant dining rooms with coffered ceilings are all spacious and comfortable, making them the perfect location to enjoy time together with family or entertaining friends. In addition, some models include such impressive extras as classic French doors, transom windows and custom octagonal skylights allowing light to travel throughout the home for a bright and spacious feel.

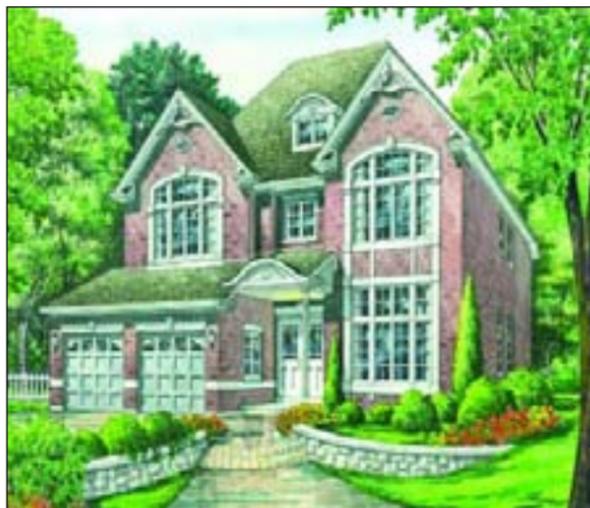
For their homeowner's convenience, most John Boddy Homes include main or second floor laundry rooms, laundry chutes, kitchen breakfast bars, private water closets, interior garage access, high efficiency furnaces and basement rough-ins for future bathrooms. Also, windows are vinyl clad wood which allows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

Innovative floorplan designs combined with an extensive array of standard features included with every new home have become a corporate trademark of John Boddy Homes and 'Eagle Glen'. Not only does a John Boddy home offer such striking standard features, there are also a wealth of opportunities to upgrade, making their homes as unique as each individual homeowner. The 'Eagle Glen' Sales Office features a Décor Centre that contains a wide range of upgrade items to select from in order to customize your home. Their high-tech electrical and décor consultants allow homebuyers to make upgrade selections on site, enabling them to conveniently personalize their home.

When you purchase a new home in 'Eagle Glen'



The Stonegate



Eagle Glen - Model to View



The Parklane - Model to View

there are no hidden closing costs. John Boddy Homes pays for education levies, development charges, water and hydro meter hookup fees, boulevard tree planting, landscape package and a paved driveway.

Currently John Boddy Homes is offering an incentive package of \$3,000 in free upgrades or 5 appliances to all new home purchasers. Also included is one year of Roger's services for free! Included in this package are home phone with 150 long distance minutes and 2 calling features, personal TV with free rental of a standard definition box, a HD digital box, VIP package, free on demand programming, Canadian timeshifting channels as well as Rogers Hi-Speed internet service and all are installed for free.

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

Since 1955, John Boddy has been involved in the construction of thousands of new homes throughout Ontario, and has earned a reputation as an accom-

plished builder of fine residential communities. Of significance are the award winning 1000-acre 'Bridlewood Community' developed during the 1960's and 1970's in Scarborough, the 'Forestbrook' Community' in Pickering developed in the 1980's, 'Willowcreek' in Peterborough, and 'Eagle Ridge on the Green' in Ajax developed in the 1990's and early 2000's.

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

With three fully furnished model homes a visit to 'Eagle Glen' is a must. Drop by the Sales Presentation Centre located on Stevensgate Drive, north of Rossland Road West, one half kilometre west of Westney Road three kilometres north of Hwy. 401. Sales office hours are Monday through Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and Holidays 11:00 a.m. to 6:00p.m; closed Friday. Let their friendly knowledgeable staff help you determine which of the many home styles available is perfect for you and your family and get set to join the ever-growing 'Eagle Glen' family community.

For more information, please call (905) 619-1777 or visit their website at www.johnboddy-homes.com.

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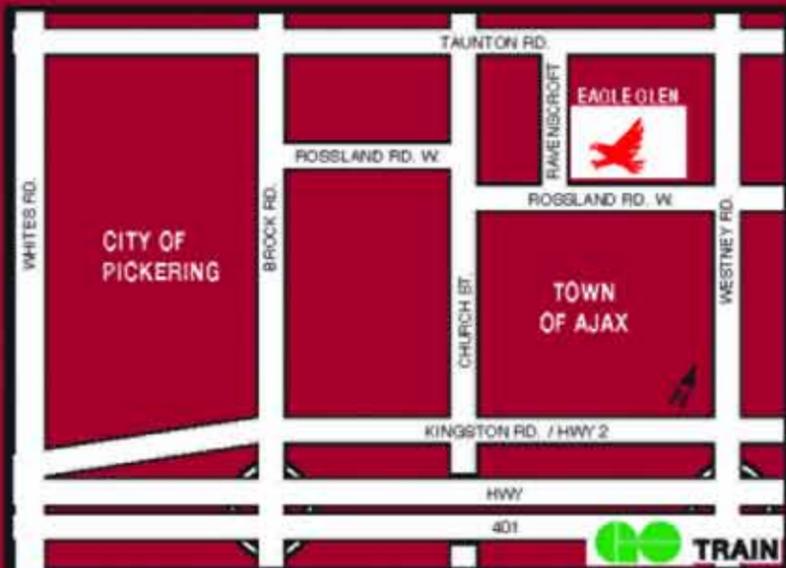
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Arts and Forms



Menaka Thakkar Dance Company's Recital at the Harbourfront Centre.....

*"Let Your Life lightly dance on the
edges of Time
Like Dew on the tip of a leaf"*

- Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore has always enjoyed drama and plays. His main objective was to find ways and means of expressing his poetry better. Tagore first used Music to achieve this and later he felt that the medium of Dance could be used to enhance expression and the ideas embodied in his lyrics. His final achievement in the last decade of his life was to combine the three dimensions of Song, Drama and Dance.

The Menaka Thakkar Dance Academy paid a glowing tribute to this great poet recently with a performance titled Tribute to Tagore in their dance recital at the Fleck Dance Theatre at the Harbourfront Centre to celebrate 70 years of Menaka Thakkar and 40 years of her Dance Academy – Nrytykala. The two main performances at the recital were titled "In the Further soil" which was the making of an Indian Dancer in Canada and "Tribute to Tagore" performed by Menaka Thakkar.

The Dance Recital was generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, Canadian Heritage, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, ATN, CMR & mybindi.com

Seen here are some pictures taken at the Dance Recital:

Celebrating 70 Years of Menaka & 40 Years of Nrytykala's Classical & Contemporary Indian Dance



"Shapes and Rhythms" Choreography by Menaka Thakkar and the Dancers are from Menaka Thakkar Dance Company. Recital performed on Nov 11 and Nov 12



*"In the Further Soil"
Choreography by Menaka Thakkar and the Dancer is Sukaneya Subramanian (dancer of MTDC) Recital performed on Nov 11 and Nov 12*



"Pushpanjali" Choreography by Menaka Thakkar Dancers are from Menaka Thakkar Dance Company and the recital was performed on Nov 11 and Nov 12

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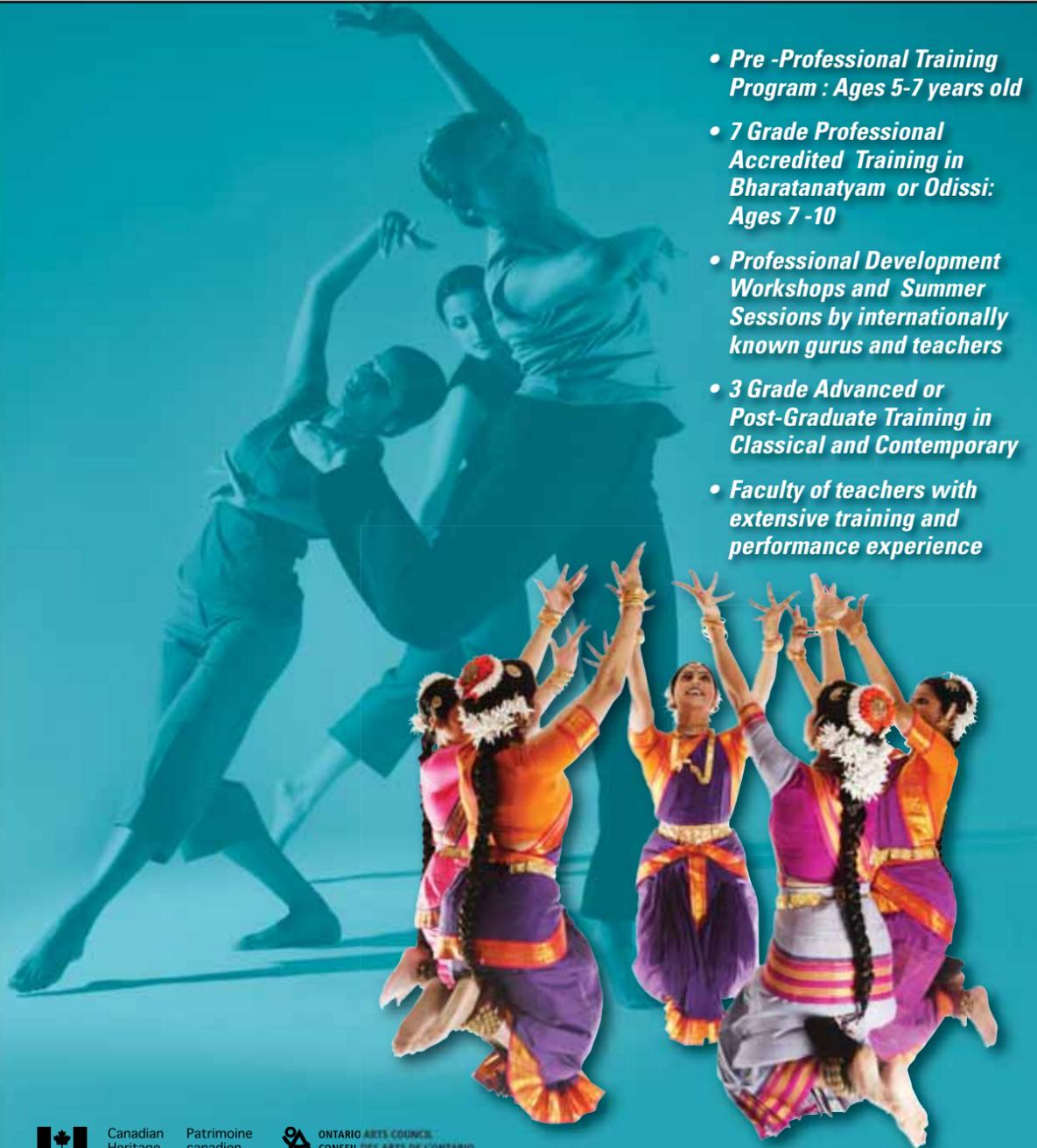
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PROVIDENCE HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION

RBC Sponsors “Diversity Session” for Providence Community Partners

Providence Healthcare Foundation welcomed 50 ‘Partners’ and guests from local businesses on October 27, 2011 for an informative “Diversity Session”, generously sponsored by RBC. We had a promising turnout of engaged community members at this educational networking event, which emphasized the benefits of hiring a diverse workforce. Our three panellists: Sultana Lalani (Adecco Employment Services), Manjeet Dhiman (ACCESS Employment), and Courtney Betty (Founder, Diversity Business Network), shared some valuable information about partnering with external providers who embrace and reflect the diversity of our city.

Providence Community Partners is a growing, dynamic program offering incredible value to businesses in the GTA, and is open to anyone looking to get involved in the community and network with potential vendors and clients. This forward-thinking program is targeting business professionals that reflect the diversity of Providence Healthcare’s local business community — politically, geographically and ethnically — and share a like-minded business philosophy that embraces philanthropy. Our Providence Community Partners cover a wide range of industries from various sectors, including health care, banking, education, media, accounting, and retail. Each year we offer five events featuring high profile speakers, including business health seminars, technology education sessions, and a post-budget breakfast with local politicians.

Providence Healthcare is a leading Toronto health care facility, specializing in rehabilitation for patients who have experienced strokes, orthopaedic surgery, or lower limb amputation, or who require specialized geriatric rehabilitation, assessment and treatment. We also provide complex continuing care, long-term care and community outreach with a particular focus on addressing the medical, physical, spiritual and emotional needs of individuals with geriatric conditions.

If you are interested in learning more about Providence Community Partners, or you would like to come for a tour of the facility, please contact Emily Dawson at 416-285-3666, ext. 4232 or at edawson@providence.on.ca.



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Mark Beckles, Regional Vice President, RBC.



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Darri Beaulieu, Learning Enrichment Foundation, Ronit White, Toronto Community News, Beth Johnson, Chief Communications Officer, Providence Healthcare.



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Op-Ed



Pt Jawaharlal Nehru had strong scientific temper



by Dr Kanayalal Raina

Science occupied a central place in Pt Jawaharlal Nehru's vision of good society. As a scholar at Cambridge, he had acquired a sensitive understanding of the intellectual matrix of science and this understanding became deeper through extensive reading of socialist literature. In many ways Pt Nehru was the greatest man of our age. His name and fame will resound throughout the world in the ages to come. His love of science was only one facet of his complex, many sided, mysterious personality, yet his depth of understanding of science was perhaps unique among world leaders. He said, "The future belongs to science and to those who make friends with science".

Science for Pt Nehru was more than just a conglomeration of disciplines dealing with the development of material resources. He was concerned with, what he described as a scientific temper which enables man to look upon himself, upon society and upon the problems facing mankind with an intellectual vigor, which combines sympathy with objectivity. To him science is an effective agent to bring social and economic transformation. It doesn't solve man's present day problems but also governs the future course of civilization also. Pt. Nehru often referred to the paradox of India being a rich country inhabited by poor and starving people and asked, "Why are we unable to convert our natural endowments into wealth meaningful to our people?" And the question was answered in the book 'Discovery of India' in these words: "It is science alone that could solve the problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and decaying customs and tradition".

After our country achieved independence his gaze was on development since he wanted to concretize his vision on new India. As Prime Minister he wanted India to develop along modern lines and make rapid strides lest it should be left behind in the competitive world so he looked upon science and technology as the levers for this purpose and for raising the living standards of masses.

In 1950 Planning Commission was set up to devise strategy of rapid econom-

ic growth as well as of the reduction in economic disparities. Heavy industries, Machine tool factories, fertilizer plants, shipping and aeronautical industries came up with amazing speed. Towns and cities started cropping up at places which had known no habitation at all. The entire rural India was connected through a network of village development blocks and community projects.

During British period emphasis on Indian science and technology was directed towards meeting the needs and requirements of the then Government for increasing trade communication and defenses. This resulted in several important advances such as the first scientific survey of the country and a network of meteorological stations, the buildings of canals and railway system. Several academic institutions were created. The end of 19th century and the first 50 yrs. of 20th century produced some of the ablest scientist the country has known and this period is recognized as the Renaissance of science for India.

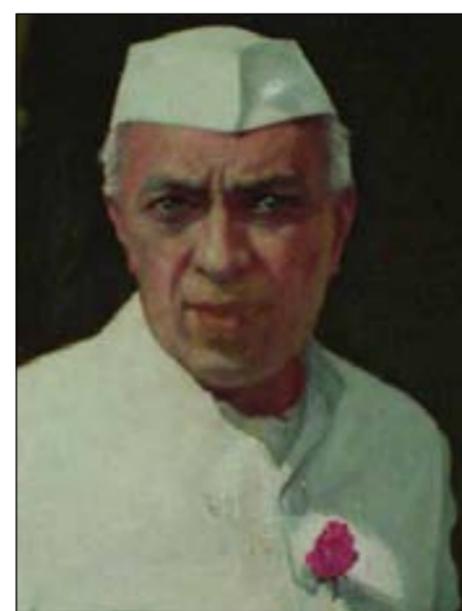
Shanti Swaroop Bhatnagar(1894-1955) an outstanding chemist in his own right, worked very closely with Pt Nehru and founded the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) with a chain of National Laboratories. In the later period, another person who made the greatest impact on Indian Science was Dr Homi Bhabha, the father of India's Nuclear Program. He was instrumental in establishing the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and the Atomic Energy Establishment which was later named after him. Dr Vikram Sarabhai was another scientist whose efforts yielded in the establishment of Space Research Organization (ISRO). However, it was only after the independence and through the vision of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru that science and technology were developed as a major force for accelerating for social and economic change.

Nehru's involvement in the promotion of scientific activities in India was of several folds. On the eve of independence he constituted a scientific manpower committee along the lines of a similar committee of England. From 1947 to 1950 in addition to being Prime Minister, he was the Minister-in-charge of scientific Research. In this capacity and even otherwise his fervent and convincing advocacy of the importance of science on motions to grant funds punctuated the parliamentary debates and lent luster and freshness to the quite often dull deliberations, presenting and defending the budget demands for scientific research he was not tired of reminding of

his colleagues, the fundamental impact of science on the modern world and its implications for the Indian science. He laid the foundation for the establishment of a chain of national laboratories and continued as the chairman of the Governing Council of Scientific and Industrial Research until his death. From the time the Department of Atomic Energy was created, it remained directly under his charge as Prime Minister. He was elected President of Indian Science Congress Association in 1942 and again in 1947. Since that time he attended its annual sessions regularly.

In 1950, three laboratories, namely the National Physical Laboratory in New Delhi, the National Chemical Laboratory in Poona and Central Technical Research Institute in Mysore were established. Pt. Nehru diverted his attention to the villagers in 1952 in a new effort to galvanize the national economy. He gave a call that "Everything can wait but not agriculture". This statement became a landmark in the history of India for the formulation of future policies towards agricultural development. It was for the first time that Government of India showed determination to tackle major rural problems. Research institutes on crops, animals, fisheries and other related sciences were started. Agricultural Universities, colleges and research institutes were sprung up in every part of the country. It was the vision of Pt Nehru that gave us the "Green Revolution" and placed our country on strong footing to take up any challenge on the food requirements of one billion people by the turn of 20th century.

Today, India can be proud of having the third largest manpower in the field of science and technology because of the structure which Pt Nehru laid down for higher education in fifties. It was the N.R.Sarkar Committee which reported in 1946 with regard to the post war landscape of technical education that led to the founding of an innovative technological institute at Kharagpur, afterwards it was raised to level of an institute of technology. Within four years, four others MIT's were established on the same pattern. This coincided in its own way with Pt. Nehru's vision of future India in which science and technology would play a considerable role in the development of the country. From the day these technical institutes were established, it was visualized that these institutes would compete with the best of the kind in the world. The model taken was from that from MIT at Boston. US helped directly for the establishment of MIT at Kanpur. Russian and German influence was



strong in Bombay and Madras MITs. All these institutes were developed in fifties.

The mineral raw materials constitute the backbone of industrial production. It was Pt Nehru's time that mineral exploration and mining development was given the pride of the place and its exploration made India totally self sufficient in the field of planning, engineering and construction of mines. Presently India is in a position to extend technical know-how in setting up, integrating and mining steel plants to other countries. The credit for all this goes to Jawaharlal Nehru, whose vision is being transmitted into reality. India's atomic energy program owns its beginning and development to the encouragement that Nehru gave during 17 years of his Prime Ministership. The creation of the Department of Atomic Energy in 1954 as an independent Ministry with Pt Nehru as its in charge was a radical departure from the normal methodologies of the working of the Government Ministries. It was Pt. Nehru who started the space Program in 1963 and its first centre at Thumba started functioning. Later on India undertook many complex projects and accomplished them. As President of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, on 23rd May 1964, Pt Nehru approved for the setting of National Laboratory devoted to the study of the Ocean. This decision led to the establishment of the National Institute of Oceanography and Research soon after his death.

Pt. Nehru had strong scientific temper which dispels difference between myths and logics. From the foregoing account it is ample clear that our impressive achievements in the field of science and technology during the post independence period own a great deal to the interest, support and patronage of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.



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Special Feature



Eagle Christian Fellowship Performs in Aid of Displaced School Project in Jaffna

By: J.J. Atputharajah

The Eagle Christian Fellowship staged their annual program of Musical and Arts Presentation at Markham Theatre for Performing Arts recently. It is in aid of the Displaced School Children at St. John's and Chundikuli Girls College, Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The message of the Birth and Mission of the Lord Jesus Christ was conveyed through music, songs, dances and drama to the delight of Christian folk around Toronto and its suburbs. The hundreds of volunteers who participated included singers, actors, actresses, dance groups, musicians and stage managers.

The organiser and coordinator, Joel Joseph deserve the gratitude of all those who witnessed such a grand and purposeful program. The majority of the participants were children and young adults and such a cultural program is a great way to instil in their minds the values of Christian principles and experience. The passion for the divine purposes of God's immaculate plan can best be channelled into the lives of the young ones through such indelible experience further enhanced by the purpose of the performance in the cause of the needy in our homelands.

The message of the Lord Jesus portrayed through a story of a family who lose their breadwinner as he happened to

be a military man dying in a war in the cause of his country. The choice of the plot is very coincidental as the purpose of the performance is also to raise funds for the children affected by war in Sri Lanka. The family finds solace in the story of the birth and mission of Jesus Christ. Selvarani Vyravipplai as Grandmother Agnes who leads her family in the spiritual journey gives a sterling and inimitable performance, captivating the plaudits of the audience. All the supporting cast played their roles effectively. Music is a very appropriate way of accessing the minds of the young and the old and proves to be a successful vehicle of fellowship and evangelism. The Birth of Christ is cogently portrayed through carols, dances and music. The inclusion of other dancing groups enrich the performance in a mighty way.



TCCC Celebrates 25th Anniversary

By: J.J. Atputharajah

The Tamil Christian Church of Canada celebrated its 25th anniversary on the 20th of November at the BMC Church Building at Scarborough. Gunam Hunt who gave a brief history of the church at the start of the thanksgiving service narrated how the church started as a small group of Sri Lankan Tamil immigrants who got together and worshipped at the home of one of them so that they could practise their own way of religious observance. He said in 1976 they didn't have any access to a Tamil typewriter but they made photocopies hand-written Tamil hymns for the services. It is a gradual growth to the full-fledged church they have today at Bridletowne Circle though they just became 50% owners on their 25th year of existence. He also thanked the pastors and church office-bearers who helped in many ways for the progress of the church movement. Special mention was made of Revrds: Bobby Mather, Lysander, Isaac Selvaratnam and the incumbent Dr. Samuel Vinson.

The current Chairman of the Board of Directors, Tony Balasingam related how the church pursued to purchase a building of their own and now it has succeeded in arriving at an agreement with the Bridletowne Church to be co-owners of the building. Though they will function as independent churches in the same building, they will jointly engage in areas

like evangelism and social service especially among the new immigrants and the needy. He also thanked the incumbent Pastor Samuel Vinson, in initiating the building procurement- agreement with the BMC. He further appreciated the services of Pastor Vinson for his vision for the church which is well illustrated in the new meanings he had assigned to the letters T -C- C- C- 'Towards a Christ Centered Church'. The church again will have the vision of three 'e's being edification, empowerment and evangelism'. These were the main goals set by the shepherd (pastor) the sheep (congregation).

The Service of Thanksgiving was well organized with meaningful and sweetly rendered Tamil songs ('Thevalayam, Thevalayam', 'prasannam irangum neram') and program of service in which all levels of the congregation took part. Special mention should be made of the children /youth choir and the Seniors' Choir.

Dr. Howard Snyder of the Tyndale Bible College gave the message on the subject 'Dwelling in God's house'. He explained that the church, our bodies and the universe can be reckoned as God's dwelling place. Thanks giving service came to a conclusion with the celebration of the Holy Communion. The large gathering present were treated to a sumptuous tea-party where all participants enjoyed the fellowship time.

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Spirituality

WORDS OF PEACE



A Relationship with Life

"Life," says Maharaji, "is offering you something. Do you have a relationship with it?"

Indian by birth, but now, after decades of travel, a citizen of the world, Maharaji speaks to audiences of every size about personal fulfillment. He talks about a peace within the heart that brings contentment to those who seek it. He has spoken to millions of people around the world, in situations ranging from international convocations of professors and diplomats to groups of villagers. His words have been translated into hundreds of languages and are available in a variety of media.

"In this world," Maharaji says, "you have different relationships. They don't always work out. Sometimes they are a source of incredible amounts of pain. I am not talking about those relationships; I am talking about your relationship with the power of life within you."

The power keeping us alive, Maharaji says, sustains all living things. "Look at a bee and a flower," he says. "Over hundreds of thousands of years, they have established a relationship. Whether the flower knows this, I don't know; whether the bee knows this, I don't know—but there is a relationship."

"The relationship is that the flower offers a sweet nectar the bees like, and so they come looking for that nectar. Every time they land on that flower, they get a little pollen on them. Then the bees fly away. They land on another flower, and they pollinate that flower."

"So the flower gets to do something



that it couldn't normally do. It can't fly around. It doesn't have wings. It can't go very far, but the bees can. The flower offers the nectar, and the bees do the pollinating. What a beautiful relationship!"

How does that example relate to our lives?

"This is where it becomes very beautiful," Maharaji says, "because life, like that flower, is offering something. I'm not talking about this world. I'm talking about the power of life itself. It's offering something. The sky, the air, water, this Earth, this body—these are not our ideas. We couldn't come up with all this, but here we are."

"The question is what our relationship is to that power. Do we know how to accept it? The bees know how to accept the nectar. There are flowers in many places that have evolved such a specific

relationship with hummingbirds that the shape of the bird's beak will only let it get nectar from that type of flower. It's specialized.

"Have we specialized to receive the gift being offered to us? No. Instead, what do people do? They try to oblige this world. In doing so, all of a sudden they find that a lifetime is not enough. How can someone make a master happy who doesn't know how to be happy? Yet the world is just such a master. It doesn't know how to be happy."

"Only one thing can make us truly happy, and that's the power that gives us life. Nothing can be happier than that. That's as happy as anyone or anything can be. What if the opportunity of being alive and the purpose of being alive is in fact an invitation from that power? 'Feel me. Experience me.' What if the purpose

of being alive is simply that?"

Maharaji offers to help people get in touch with that power within themselves.

"If you agree that we should have that relationship with the power of life," he says, "and you agree that we should be specialized to be able to take full advantage of what it is offering, then how can you do that? The answer is that there is a way to specialize so that you can take full advantage of what's being offered."

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Humanity is entering the most pivotal phase of its existence. The coming times shall witness the most novel and undreamt of changes in the course of its long evolution. The human race as a distinct coherent unit has passed through various evolutionary stages and is now approaching its long awaited coming of age.

With the scientific and technological advances arising out of the ingenuity of mankind, man has progressed greatly in the material world. His inventions have made his worldly life more comfortable. Yet he is unhappy. In spite of all these advancements and inventions, man is still lost. His inability to drive out the looming specter of war, the threatened collapse of the international economic order, the spread of anarchy and terrorism has landed him in a no-man's land.

Today, aggression and conflict characterize our social, economic and religious systems. This is because he has hardly progressed in the inner world. In

his mad rush towards material happiness he has lost sight of the source of his sorrow, the chaos inside. Not recognizing the emptiness within, he indulges in various pursuits, all of which essentially serve to keep him busy in an attempt to run away from that emptiness.

This can be seen by observing his constant attempts to set new goals to be pursued and from his ceaseless quest for recognition in society. The consequence of this escapism is added mental stress during the conflict within the family, within society and finally to global conflict.

Life is a movement. It sways between order and disorder, arising and ceasing. In the natural course of events, as order moves toward disorder it would move you away from Oneness towards division. In a family whenever there is hurt and mistrust it's a movement away from Oneness. A healing of the heart, the flowering of love is a way to return to Oneness.

As conscious beings, you could use the power of the deeksha to cause this flow to move back from division into Oneness, to erect a social system which is progressive and peaceful, dynamic and harmonious, a system giving free play to individual creativity and initiative, but based on cooperation and reciprocity.

When there is disorder in the family, in the comity of nations and the varied forms of life, the return to Oneness within is possible. It is attainable through the acceptance of life and the experience of oneself without resistance and there is some opportunity to raise life to a level of order and Oneness.

When the Oneness phenomenon began we received several revelations. These revelations pointed to an awakening in Africa leading to global change. The revelations showed that there would be a quickening of awakening across the planet starting with 2012. All one needs to be is a seeker with passion, one who is concerned about humanity and the suffering of all life.

Those who have the passion within are the ones that would quickly get awakened. Once transformed, their very presence, their increased levels of awareness would naturally help others to move into higher levels of consciousness.

Chaos is always a precursor to a change in consciousness and we are certainly at a time of chaos. Remember, therefore that every challenge comes in the form of disorder and division. It is beckoning us towards a greater level of order and Oneness. Since psychologically we are inseparable from the rest of humanity, every individual who awakens to Oneness automatically impacts several thousands of beings, helping them grow towards a greater experience of reality and to discover newer ways of living and loving. You create a better planet for the present and the future.

AmmaBhagwan Darshan GLOBAL AFRICA UBUNTU Deeksha
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1FsN908t5U&feature=youtu.be>



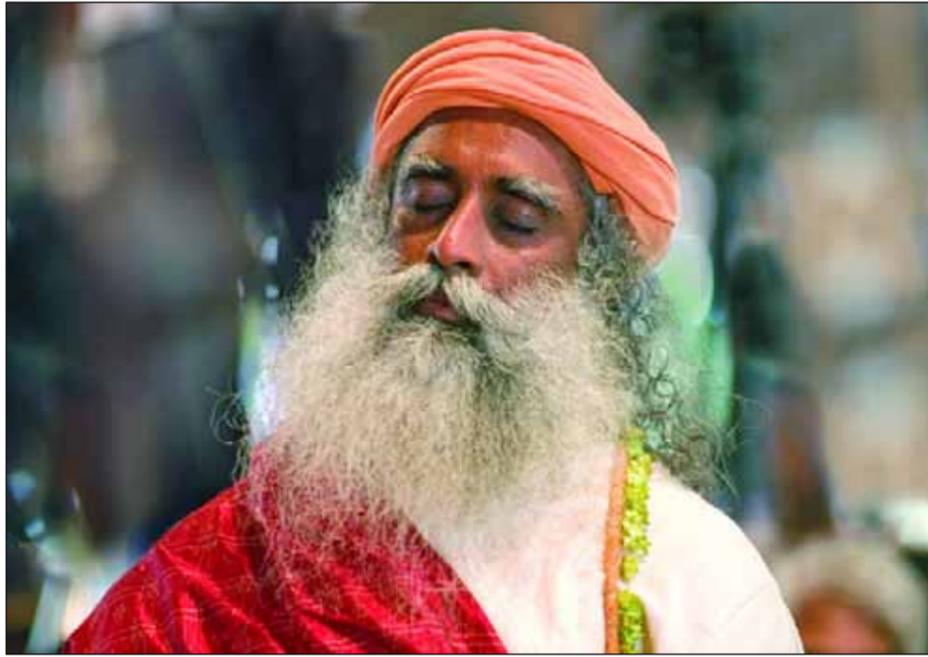
Spirituality

Flexing Out of Bondages

The complexities that one encounters on the spiritual path are not because of the path. The complexities are only there because of the mess that is your mind.

During the practice of yoga **asanas**¹ you realize how rigid you are physically. It takes a little more awareness for you to know the rigidity in your mind and emotions. Somebody who is very rigid in his thoughts and emotions believes that he is perfect because he does not allow room for any other way of looking, thinking or feeling. When you meet this man, you think he is pig-headed, but he thinks he is perfect. Similarly, there can be rigidity on the energy level. For someone whose energy is very fluid, on the very first day of the simplest yoga **kriya**², the energy will start moving and transforming, whereas for another person, even after practicing it for a long time, nothing seems to happen. This simply depends on how malleable the energies are. The rigidity in all these dimensions isn't really separate, they are all interconnected. The rigidity in one dimension manifests itself into the others.

On Patanjali's path, yoga is a system where it doesn't matter what kind of a fool you are, what level of unawareness you're in, what kind of karmic bondages you have; there is still a way for you. If you are willing to at least bend your body, you have already broken one karma. If your forehead touches your knee, then you have broken a physical karma. This is not a joke; it's quite an achievement for a person who has never done it before. This simple limitation



Sadhguru Vasudev is a realized master, yogi and mystic, who has founded Isha Foundation, an international public service organization that strives for ultimate human well-being.

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would have increased with the passage of time. Even the little flexibility that's there in you today will become less as time goes by. A day will come when you're totally rigid, both physically and mentally.

1 asana: *lit. seat; generally referring to yogic postures; one of the eight limbs of yoga*

2 kriya: *lit. action; certain yogic practices to transform one's energies*

This is happening to everybody. Look at your own life; see how flexible you were at the age of ten or twelve, both physically and mentally. At the age of

twenty, the flexibility is considerably less and at the age of thirty, most of it is gone. Not only physically, mental rigidity has also set in very severely as you progress on this path; it's not progression, rather it is regression. Life is just a regression for most people. They are not growing; they are going backwards. Even with what little assets they have come, they don't grow; they just go backwards, unfortunately. Whatever advantage you were born with, you haven't enhanced it; you have only taken it backwards.

The path is actually very simple, but because of your personality it has become extremely complicated. The path by itself is not complicated. The complexities that one encounters on the spiritual path are not because of the path. The complexities are only there because of the mess that is your mind. Nothing moves within you. You become rigid, as if rigor mortis has set in. You need the Master's Grace to quell the madness of your mind.

If you allow the Master's Grace, then the path is very simple, as the path is the destination. If you simply sit here now, your whole being will pulsate with the existence.

You have kept your energies suppressed to such an extent, the mind has become so oppressive that it suppresses life to the point where nothing moves except what is needed to support the ego. Your energies are moving only to the extent that is convenient for your ego; a little more energy and the ego will burst. The moment energy rises within you, everything is dissolved. The ego knows it very well. That is why it has kept it suppressed. If you don't have any energy, then again the ego will become very weak. When all energy is cut off, the ego will feel very weak and it doesn't like that.

So it just allows the amount of energy which supports and feeds it well. If the

energy becomes too much, the ego will be shattered. If **kundalini**¹ begins to rise, everything will be shattered and nothing will be left. You will be just a force merging with everything around you. You won't have a will of your own anymore. Since you are not willing to surrender your will, we are prodding you through this **sadhana**² to provoke your energies. That is why the path of asana and kriya. Since you are not able to do it by yourself, just activate creation itself in a certain way. If it begins to move, it settles everything. It is like a flood; your centuries-old world is wiped away in only a few hours of fury. So your sadhana is not about getting somewhere. It is just a way, a method to unleash a flood so enormous that it wipes away your petty creations and leaves you as the Creator intended you to be.

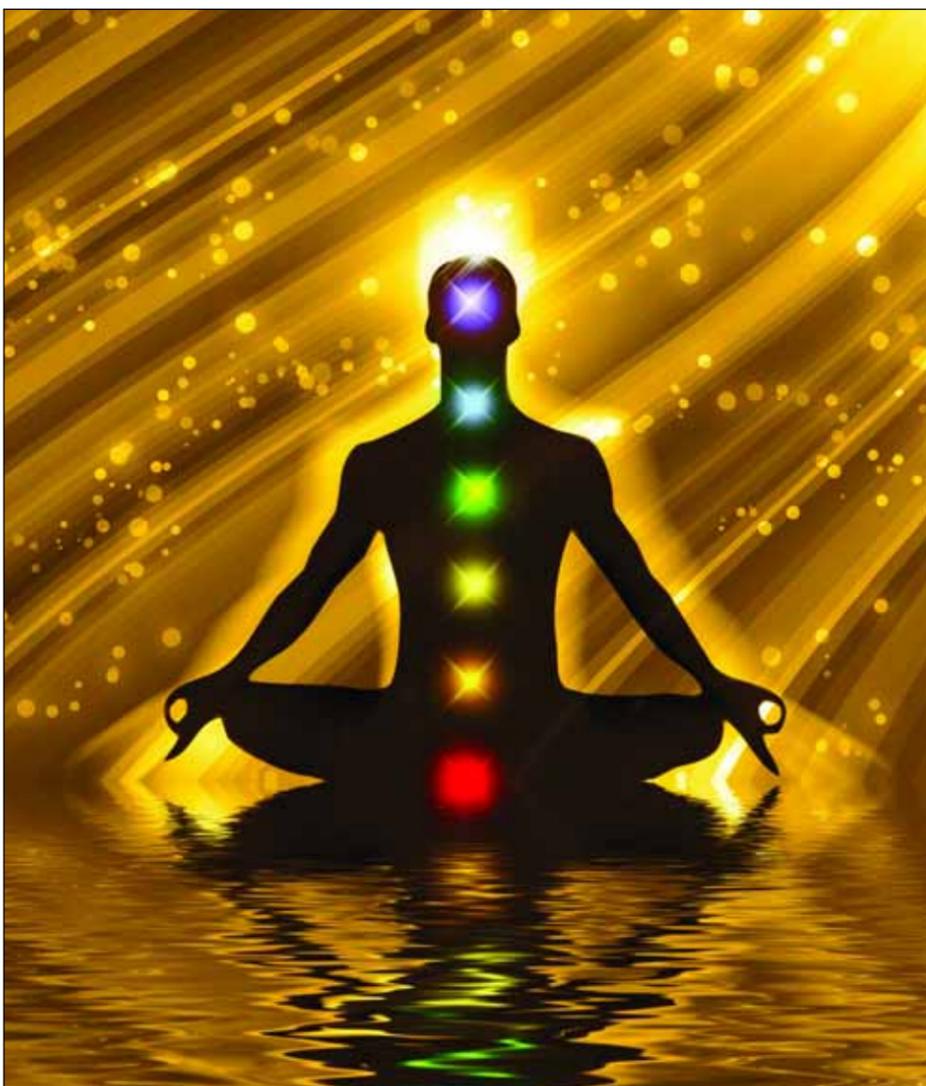
1 kundalini: *lit. serpent power; life energy which is depicted as a snake coiled at the base of the spine (muladhara chakra) and that eventually, through the practice of yoga, rises upto sahasrar chakra.*

2 sadhana: *spiritual practices*

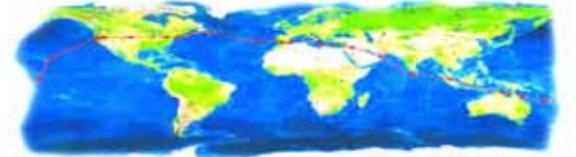
Sadhguru J. Vasudev is a contemporary mystic rooted as strongly in worldly and pragmatic matters as he is in inner experience and wisdom. Named one of India's 50 most influential people, he has addressed prominent global forums on issues as diverse as socio-economic development, leadership and spirituality. 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



Around the world



Pandemonium in Sri Lanka parliament as MPs clash during budget speech

by D.B.S. Jeyaraj

Pandemonium erupted in the Sri Lankan Parliament on Monday November 21st 2011 as MP's belonging to the ruling United Peoples Freedom Alliance (UPFA) and opposition United National Party (UNP) clashed openly in the presence of Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa during the presentation of the budget for the forthcoming year.

In what was a shameful spectacle viewed by several diplomats, high ranking govt officials, media personnel and eminent citizens, there were fisticuffs, scuffles, man-handling, hurling of water bottles, books, files, papers, abuse, threats and tugging of sarees worn by some woman MP's.

Although the majority of MP's on either side remained passive, the antics of a few Parliamentarians brought great disrepute to the August assembly despite the presence of Sri Lanka's head of state in the House by the Diyawanna Oya.

The opposition MP's from the Democratic National Alliance (DNA) and Tamil National Alliance (TNA) as well as Govt MP's from other political parties were not part of the furor. Only MP's from the UPFA and UNP were actively involved in the fracas.

It all began with the dawning of budget day on Nov 21st. President Mahinda Rajapaksa who is also the Finance minister was scheduled to attend Parliament and deliver the Budget speech.

INTELLIGENCE

The Govt received intelligence reports that the UNP planned to stage demonstrations brandishing placards and posters with slogans against the President during Parliamentary proceedings. The Speaker Chamal Rajapaksa was informed.

In a controversial, preemptive move the speaker instructed the sergeant at arms to authorize Police to search the premises for placards and posters and to prevent MP's from bringing such material into the Lobby.

The Police following orders conducted a search and then wanted to go into the Opposition leaders office for an intensive search. UNP parliamentarians vehemently protested at this breach of Parliamentary etiquette and stopped it.

Police however prevented UNP MP's from bringing in documents or files on the basis that posters could be hidden inside. Police forcibly took away files in the possession of UNP Parliamentarians Dr. Jayalath Jayewardena and Tissa Attanayake.

This high handed action by the Police was a grave infringement of the Parliamentary privileges of MP's complained the UNP which stated the Police had no right to seize material from an MP inside Parliament or prevent an MP from carrying documents and files into the lobby.

After Parliamentary proceedings began, President Rajapaksa entered and commenced the Budget speech at the auspicious time of 1.53 pm. At this time the

UNP's Dr. Jayalath Jayewardena stood up and tried to raise a point of order about his rights and privileges as an MP being infringed upon by the Police.

OVERRULED

The Speaker overruled him saying that he would not allow it as the second reading of the appropriation bill had commenced. A smiling President continued with his address amidst thundering cheers and applause from the Treasury benches.

The President prefaced his speech with the remark about how happy he was to present his seventh budget before Parliament with his elder brother presiding as speaker. As the speech progressed opposition MP's began interrupting heckling and booing. Govt MP's began retorting. The President also made a few remarks and continued reading the speech.

At one stage some of the UNP MP's raised placards and posters with the slogan "Budget or Bucket" and "Shame" written in Sinhala, Tamil and English. Many of these posters were improvised ones with "Shame" being written on A-4 size paper.

This led to much shouting and cross talk between UNP and UPFA Parliamentarians. At one point President Rajapaksa lost his cool and told Dr. Jayalath Jayewardena that he would dissolve Parliament if necessary to teach opposition MP's a lesson. "only God can save you all then" he stated.

Unfazed the UNP Parliamentarians continued to wave their posters and handleless placards. They also shouted "shame, shame" and "bucket budget" loudly.

It was then that Lohan Ratwatte, UPFA Kandy district MP and son of former cabinet minister Anuruddha Ratwatte went up to UNP's chief whip John Amaratunga and snatched away the poster in his hands.

When the taller Amaratunga tried to wrest the poster back, the UPFA's Polonnaruwe district MP Roshan Ranasinghe went up to both and pushed Amaratunga back. Lohan Ratwatte then sprinted back to his seat with his prize.

HARIN FERNANDO

But when Roshan Ranasinghe walked back triumphantly he found his way blocked by the UNP's "fiery particle" from Badulla district Harin Fernando. Both came to blows after a heated inter-play of words. This saw UPFA Badulla district MP Chamika Buddhadasa rush to the aid of Roshan Ranasinghe and confront his UNP rival Harin Fernando. This in turn saw UNP Moneragala district MP Ranjith Madduma Bandara join the scuffle to help his colleague Harin Fernando. This in turn saw former speaker WJM Lokubandara's son and Badulla district MP Udith Lokubandara also joining in the "frolics".

At this point of time the "combat" seemed to be a home and home fight between the "merry men of Uva" as Buddhadasa, Lokubandara, Madduma Bandara and Harin Fernando were all MP's representing the Uva province. But the conflict soon escalated.

The floodgates were now open and a number of MP's from the Govt side got up from the back rows and moved up to the front to join in the fracas. These included some backbenchers and a few holding ministerial and deputy ministerial portfolios.

The Govt Parliamentary combatants were led by Gampaha district MP and minister of Public relations and Public affairs "Doctor" Mervyn Silva. True to form the self-styled descendant of Dutugemmu fearlessly led his knights at arms into the fray asking and giving no quarter.

PUGILISTS

Among other portfolio wielding pugilists risking dignity and self-respect in the line of duty were Sports Minister and Kandy district MP Mahindananda Aluthgamage, Civil aviation minister and Puttalam district MP Priyankara Jayaratne and Deputy minister of Health and Kegalle district MP Lalith Dissanayake

Among the noteworthy champions from MP Parliamentary ranks in the fray for President and party were two from Sabaragamuwa, T. Ranjith de Soysa (Ratnapura) and Kanaka Herath (Kegalle)

It was like a rugby scrum sans the oval ball with the Parliamentarians engaging in a free-wheeling scuffle trading blows and exchanging in the choicest language, threats and insults.

Interestingly the combatants on both sides were from the Majority community with minority ethnicity MP's being conspicuously absent from the fracas. It was thus a Pan-Sinhala "event".

While this was going on there was a loud outcry from both sides with Parliamentarians shouting slogans and hurling insults at each other. Govt MP's also began throwing water bottles, books, files and papers at the opposition.

One book landed right in front of UNP senior deputy leader and Gampaha district MP Karu Jayasuriya. A water bottle hit the leg of opposition and UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Excelling in this type of sport was the UPFA's 74 year old national list MP Kamala Ranathunga whose unerring markswomanhood in striking bulls-eye was astoundingly remarkable.

WATER BOTTLE

One of the water bottles thrown from the govt back row at the opposition fell short of its mark and hit the floor very close to President Rajapaksa who stopped reading the speech and started entreating the MP's to stop.

At one point an exasperated President shouted in Sinhala saying "MP's from the Govt. At least you all return to your seats". A few obliged but the rest continued with the "satana".

Meanwhile the speaker Chamal Rajapaksa called upon Sergeant-at-Arms Anil P. Samarasekara to restore order. The Sgt at arms and his staff tried to restrain the pugilistic MP's and make them cease combat. The squabbling however continued.

Deputy minister of Education and Moneragala district MP Wijayamuni de Zoysa in a burst of frenzy rushed up to the opposition benches and began to sweep everything on their tables to the floor. He also seized books and documents and threw them away.

Not to be outdone Kalutara district MP and deputy minister of Ports and Highways Rohitha Abeygunawardana went up to Matara district MP and former cabinet minister Mangala Samaraweera and



Scuffle during budget presentation



Diplomats in the viewer's gallery

grabbed him by the collar trying to assault him. Samaraweera resisted and other UNP Parliamentarians gathered around and restrained Abeygunawardana.

Some of the woman MP's in UNP ranks like Rosy Senanayake and Anoma Gamage also found themselves targets of sorts and had hands tugging at their sarees.

Education minister and Colombo district MP Bandula Gunawardena strove diligently to cool tempers and instill a modicum of discipline and decorum into his "warrior" colleagues. The Education minister deserved a bouquet for his ennobling efforts.

WALKED OUT

Gradually the melee subsided and commotion ceased. President Rajapaksa resumed his star-crossed budget address. But an aggrieved UNP would have none of it. Refusing to remain in Parliament after what they termed was "a murderous attack by govt members" the UNP led by Ranil Wickremesinghe walked out of Parliament.

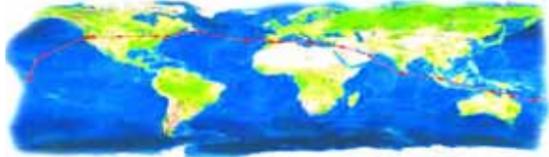
The Opposition leader then held a press conference where Mr. Wickremesinghe charged that key UNP Parliamentarians such as Karu Jayasuriya, John Amaratunga, Joseph Michael Perera, Jayalath Jayawardena, Rosy Senanayake, Mangala Samaraweera, Anoma Gamage and Harin Fernando were assaulted and threatened by government MP's in Parliament. He added that some of them will have to undergo medical check-ups as a result of what he termed a 'brutal attack.'

The UNP leader said government Ministers and MP's such as Roshan Ranasinghe, Lohan Ratwatte, Udith Lokubandara, Mervyn Silva, Lalith Dissanayake, Rohitha Abeygunawardana, Wijithamuni Zoysa, Piyankara Jayaratne and Kamala Ranatunge were responsible for attacks and threats on Opposition MP's

Even as the UNP was accusing the government MP's of attacking them in Parliament President Mahinda Rajapaksa winding up his budget speech requested the UNP to unite and support the Government for the betterment of the country

Thus ended an ugly chapter in the Parliamentary history of the Island nation where Government and opposition MP's fought each other in an exhibition of rowdiness despite the Executive President being present and his elder brother the speaker presiding over proceedings. [http://twitter.com/dbsjeyaraj]

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Around the world

'War tourism,' in an environment where survivors worry about next meal and still haunted by violent past

By Nita Bhalla

ELEPHANT PASS, Sri Lanka (AlertNet) – The packed buses hurtle along the once forbidden, dusty A9 highway from the Sri Lankan capital across the former frontline to the “liberated” north – a region held by the defeated Tamil Tiger separatists for the best part of a quarter of a century.

Along the way, the buses stop and passengers descend into the hot afternoon sun, taking out their phones to photograph displays of blown-up water tanks, captured boats, armoured vehicles and monuments dedicated to the army. In some places, they buy a cool refreshment and a souvenir t-shirt.

More than two years after the Indian Ocean island's 25-year-old civil war ended, an entire generation of Sri Lankans is finally getting the opportunity to see a part of their country which was off limits. A place they had heard about, but never imagined visiting. A place now healing from the ravages of war.

“It's really interesting to see all this,” says accountant Gayan, 33, from the capital Colombo, as he holds up his BlackBerry to snap a picture of his brother and father posing in front of a captured truck. It's on display at an army-run roadside “tourist spot” at Elephant Pass, a strategic military base fought over repeatedly during the 25-year civil war.

“Growing up, we would hear about the Tigers and were scared of attacks in Colombo, so it's good to have peace and see the north,” he said, sipping some ice-cold Coke at the cafe and examining the other war relics on display – a tractor and wooden boat once owned by the Tigers.

Sri Lanka's army retook Elephant Pass, under Tiger control since 2000, as part of its 34-month offensive to end one of Asia's longest modern conflicts once and for all – retaking nearly a third of the island's land mass which the Tigers controlled, until a cataclysmic final battle defeated the separatists in May 2009.

In the nation's south, including Colombo, the victory brought an end to the constant fear of suicide bombings and other attacks that killed thousands of civilians – a hallmark of the Tigers, who were on the terrorism lists of more than 30 nations.

Now, as communities return to find their homes destroyed, possessions lost and little means of making an income, some aid workers and residents question this “war tourism” in an environment where survivors worry about their next

meal and are still haunted by their violent past.

“It's wonderful that the war has ended,” said a foreign aid worker based in the northern Kilinochchi district, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of upsetting the government.

“But given it was a horrible finish and that war-affected people are still struggling financially and emotionally to pick up the pieces and rebuild their lives, it's too soon and insensitive to be making even a small business out of it or erecting memorials to those partly responsible for civilian deaths.”

The government rejects allegations that it intentionally killed civilians during the final offensive, when some 300,000 were held hostage by the retreating Tigers.

It has ratcheted down the presence of foreign aid workers, especially in the north, where by necessity they worked with the separatists and often had their organisations infiltrated by Tiger operatives.

T-SHIRTS AND ARMY NOTEBOOKS

Most of the Tamil civilians were forced to flee with the Tigers, until army operations allowed hundreds of thousands of them to pour out. They were sent to crowded displacement camps lacking proper sanitation.

There is no conclusive figure on how many civilians were killed in the fighting in the final months.

A U.N.-sponsored report, criticised by the government as being filled with unfounded accusations that initially emerged from Tiger propaganda outlets, says there was “credible evidence” thousands and perhaps tens of thousands killed in shelling and fighting.

Yet no one who gets off the buses mentions the bloody end of the war or the struggle survivors are going through, despite the pick-up trucks laden with



World Food Programme sacks of grain and large white lorries with the familiar blue “U.N.” lettering – a telling sign that aid is still needed here.

Along the A9 Highway, which runs through the centre of Kilinochchi town, a massive concrete water tank lies fallen on its side, blown up by Tigers retreating from a place they unilaterally declared the capital of Tamil Eelam, the country they wanted to carve out as a Tamil-only preserve.

The destroyed tank is enclosed within a wall, together with a plaque and a “Souvenir Galore” shop run by the army. Visitors take a few snaps, have a cold drink and buy a black t-shirt or baseball cap with “Kilinochochi Re-awakening” emblazoned across it, or opt for the smart Sri Lanka military field notebooks on offer for a just few hundred Sri Lankan rupees.

“During the week, there are many buses and people stopping. At weekends, we get the most amount of visitors – around 600 or so,” says Nalaka Vijayapala, 24, a Sri Lankan army soldier in civilian clothes, the left side of his head scarred from sniper fire during the

war. “The army runs this place ... It's popular.”

Other monuments are also on display along the route – a giant cuboid with a bullet lodged inside it and a lotus flower and the gold, red and green Sri Lanka flag emerging from the top of it – in memory of the Sri Lankan army “in the gallant operation to annihilate savage and brutal terrorism which has terrified this land,” reads the plaque.

The government has quickly repurposed its military assets and personnel for civilian purposes, in part to help President Mahinda Rajapaksa's post-war development drive and also to keep the roughly 100,000 troops in the north gainfully engaged after the war. But for some war survivors, it is just too early.

A few hundred metres down from the imposing cuboid, 35-year-old war widow Subendine, who sells vegetables by the roadside, says the visitors bring discomfort.

“They come and go ... they take their pictures. They don't ask us or even want to know what happened,” she said.

(Editing by Bryson Hull and Rebekah Curtis) [\[trust.org\]](http://trust.org)

Sri Lanka tourist arrivals hit new record high in 2011

Sri Lanka's tourist arrivals in the first 10 months of the year has surpassed 2010's record as visitors to the island nation has continued to rise every month on a year-on-year basis since May 2009, according to a Reuters report.

The report states,

Tourist arrivals in the first ten months of 2011 jumped 34.2 percent to 667,569 from a year earlier, higher than Sri Lanka's record annual tourist arrivals of 654,476 reached last year.

The arrivals rose 32.8 percent in October from a year earlier to 69,563.

The government is targeting annual revenue of \$2.75 billion by 2016 from 2.5 million expected visitors attracted by Sri Lanka's beaches, hills and religious and historic sites, while aiming for \$3 billion in foreign direct investment.

Sri Lanka has forecast 20 percent growth in visitor arrivals this year to more than 780,000 people. Last year, the industry grew at 46 percent. The island's tourism industry drew \$1.2 billion for investment in the first half of 2011.

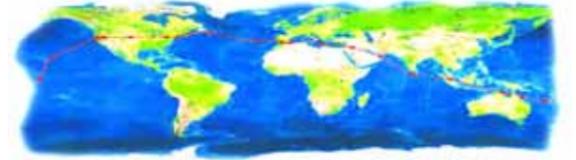
Tourism revenue, which jumped 64.8 percent in 2010 to a record \$575.9 million, has risen 48.1 percent in the first nine months of this year from a year earlier to \$580.1 million, central bank data shows.

–Sri Lanka aims to attract \$2.7 billion in investment to upgrade its post-war tourism capacity.

–The hotel and travel index on the Colombo Stock Exchange has risen nearly fourfold since the end of the war.

–Tourism is one of the main foreign exchange earners for Sri Lanka's \$50 billion economy along with remittances from expatriate workers, garments and tea.

Around the world



Bangladesh Begins 1971 War Crimes Trial

By Anjana Pasricha

Four decades after Bangladesh's violent struggle for independence from Pakistan, the country has begun the first trial of those accused of war crimes. But observers have long raised concerns about how authorities are conducting the trial and whether the prosecutions are politicized.

On Nov 20th, senior leader of the opposition Jamaat-e-Islami party, Delwar Hossain Sayedee, became the first to stand trial for the 1971 crimes. A prosecutor charged him with crimes against humanity, such as genocide, murder and rape.

Sayedee is among seven senior Bangladeshi politicians charged with war crimes during the violent nine-month struggle that led to the country's independence from Pakistan.

In addition to Sayedee, four other suspects belong to the top rungs of the opposition Jamaat-e-Islami party - Bangladesh's largest Islamic party. Two belong to the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party. They are accused of collaborating with Pakistani forces and committing atrocities during the conflict that killed an estimated three million people.

All of them maintain their innocence and accuse the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of carrying out a political vendetta against them.

Professor of politics at Dhaka University, Aaur Rahman, says there is wide acceptance that those guilty of war crimes should be brought to justice. But he says there are growing concerns about how the trials are being conducted and the credibility of those involved in meting out justice.

"They have some misgiving about the fairness of the trial, in terms of the process and whether that process is conforming to the international standard or



Bangladeshi police officers escort Delwar Hossain Sayeedi, center, a leader of Bangladesh's largest Islamic party Jamaat-e-Islami, after appearing before a special tribunal in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Nov. 21, 2011- AP Photo

not," Rahman said. "I think the government should take much more care than they did particularly in drafting some of the laws, in recruiting some of the prosecutors and in recruiting particularly the judges and the chairman of the tribunal."

The tribunal was set up last year without United Nations involvement. Human Rights Watch has said that legal procedures fall short of international standards. There have been reports of defense lawyers and witnesses being harassed. Critics also say the rules on what evidence is permissible are at variance with international law.

British lawyer John Cammegh, whose help was sought by Sayedee's defense team, has said that he was not allowed to participate in the trial or enter the country while it is happening.

The prosecutor has said the trials would be fair and are not aimed at "political axe-grinding." The government also says its legal structure is competent enough to handle the trials.

Political analysts say, unless the trials are seen as absolutely fair, they could further heighten tensions in a country with an already divisive political culture.

[VOA News]

HSBC says Indian Rupee can plumb to 58 against US dollar

The rupee can slide further and touch a level of Rs 58 a dollar in the near-term if the economic condition deteriorates in the Eurozone economies, top banking officials of HSBC Bank said on Nov 24th.

"The rupee is likely to depreciate further and touch a level of Rs 58 against the US dollar in the near-term if the Eurozone nations don't find a credible solution to their debt woes," HSBC Bank India and ASEAN chief economist Leif Eskensen based in Mumbai said. He also said the domestic currency would slide also due to high inflationary environ-

ment, and a possible slowdown in the GDP growth. "This will happen despite intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)," he said without giving any specific timeframe.

The rupee, which touched an all-time low of Rs 52.73 against the dollar on November 22, has plunged around 15 percent in 2011 as investors seek safe haven option in the US treasury papers and its currency. RBI has intervened in the forex market by selling dollars to check this volatility. As per a Citibank estimate, RBI is believed to have pumped

India, Pakistan Work Toward Normalizing Trade

By Anjana Pasricha

Efforts by South Asian rivals India and Pakistan to normalize trade ties have received further momentum, with Pakistan agreeing to open most commerce with India. The thaw in India-Pakistan trade ties is expected to bolster economic integration of the South Asian region.

At a meeting in New Delhi recently, Pakistan pledged to open its market to 7,000 goods from India over the next three months - up from the fewer than 2,000 items allowed at present. Top commerce officials from both countries also decided to open more trading posts and ease visa rules that restrict travel.

The steps follow Pakistan's decision last month to grant "most favored nation" status to India. That means the two countries are on track to trade on equal terms by removing tariffs that restricted commerce for decades.

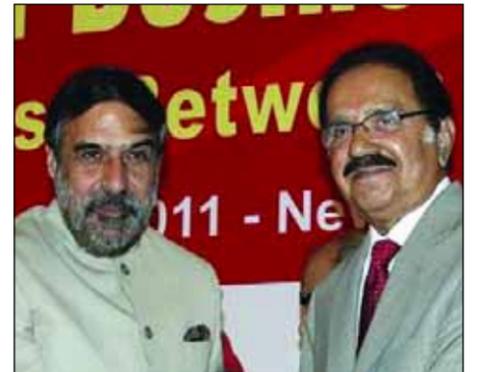
Trade analyst Nita Taneja at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations warns that favorable trade accords alone are insufficient to boost commerce. She says infrastructure improvements are needed to overcome the two countries' limited transportation links.

"Look at rail movement. You don't get wagons to transport goods across the border. There could be a wait of 45 days," Taneja said. "For instance, a lot of iron ore is getting exported from India from the eastern side and that is all going via Colombo, and then to Karachi and then coming back to Lahore."

Some steps are being taken. A new freight handling facility will be opened in the coming months at Wagah - the main land crossing between the two countries.

The business potential between India and Pakistan is underscored by the flourishing illegal trade that goes via the Middle East and is estimated at \$3 billion - higher than the official bilateral trade of about \$2.5 billion.

Economists say the benefits of normalizing trade ties between the two rivals will also help boost trade in all of



India's Trade Minister Anand Sharma and Pakistani counterpart Makhdoom Amin Fahim (R) shake hands as they attend India-Pakistan Business Conclave organized by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in New Delhi (Reuters - file photo)

South Asia - one of the world's least economically integrated regions. Regional trade is \$5 billion or just five percent of South Asia's total trade.

The head of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Rajiv Kumar, says the potential to increase regional trade is huge.

"One of the major impediments in the greater trade relations within the region was [the] India-Pakistan standoff," Kumar said. "Now that is beginning to get resolved, I think you will see a burst of trading activity and commercial activity all across the region."

At a regional conference last week, India made another push to engage in commerce with its neighbors. Kumar says this is important because India accounts for a large part of the region's economy.

"India has also taken an amazing step by announcing that all imports from less developed neighbors - Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh - will have zero tariff duty treatment," Kumar said. "That measure also will allow greater access to the Indian market.... India is the 1,000 pound gorilla in the room."

The World Bank estimates that trade within South Asia could rise to \$20 billion if restrictions are removed. Indian leaders say boosting trade ties will also make the region more politically stable.

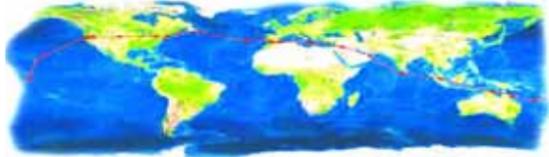
[VOA News]

in around USD 3 billion on Nov 23. The officials from the bank also said inflation and slipping fiscal deficit numbers could prove tricky for the domestic economy in the wake of ongoing sovereign debt crisis in Eurozone.

"Inflation is a much serious problem for the domestic economy in comparison to other emerging countries and it is still not under check despite monetary squeezing," Eskensen said. The HSBC officials, however, said that India is a domestic consumption driven growth story and would not be impacted as much as the export driven economies of the world.

- PTI





Around the world

Cold war in the tropics: China, India vie for Maldives

By C. Bryson Hull

ADDU CITY, Maldives (Reuters) – On the pristine equatorial shores of the Maldives, an archipelago best known for luxurious resort hideaways swathed in coral reefs and cerulean seas, India and China's regional cold war is warming up.

Stretched across 90,000 sq km (35,000 sq m) of the Indian Ocean southwest of India, the Sunni Muslim nation of 1,192 islands finds itself sandwiched between the two Asian rivals, and both flexed their muscles at a meeting of South Asian nations hosted by the Maldives recently.

China preceded the heads-of-state meeting of the eight-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) by opening its first embassy in the Maldives, a ceremony attended by Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Zhijun.

Two Maldivian officials said China had hurriedly rented a space to open the embassy in time for the summit, while the actual embassy is being built. Officials with the Chinese delegation declined repeated requests by Reuters for comment.

"The bureaucrat in me says the timing is right. You want to open something like that when there is a big official around. But opening it right before SAARC is a way to tweak India," an Asian diplomat told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

China joins India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh as the only countries with full embassies in the Maldives and, at the SAARC meeting, Beijing pushed to have its observer status raised to dialogue partner, an elevated standing it has with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

"There was no hurry or further discussion to make China a dialogue partner," Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed told reporters after the meeting.

"INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD"

India's response to China's diplomatic display included a show of military force and political largesse.

Navy frigates patrolled off the Gan

atoll, where the summit was held, to protect VIP visitors including Afghan President Hamid Karzai, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh held a one-day state visit to the capital island, Male.

"This is our extended neighborhood. We wish to work with the Maldives and other like-minded countries to ensure peace and prosperity in the Indian Ocean region," Singh told the Maldivian parliament.

India extended a \$100 million credit line, inked pacts on maritime and counterterrorism cooperation, and both nations agreed "their respective territories would not be allowed for any activity inimical to the other and by any quarter."

New Delhi has long been concerned by any moves China makes to boost its presence in neighboring countries, and is worried about the so-called "string of pearls" ambition to expand Chinese maritime influence in the Indian Ocean and beyond.

"China has made a lot of surge in the Indian Ocean rim countries. Maldives is of particular interest because it can help China gain access to the main regional forum, SAARC," Bhaskar Roy, a strategic affairs expert at the Chennai Center for China Studies, said.

China made its present felt throughout the SAARC summit. The post-summit giveaway bag included porcelain pens and diaries from the Chinese Foreign Affairs Ministry detailing "Five Years of China-SAARC Cooperation." A box for a new 40-inch TV in the media center bore a sticker: "China Aid."

CHINA'S TOURIST TAP

While India may have the edge in terms of political clout and military cooperation, China has a softer but no less powerful lever over the Maldives' \$1.5 billion economy.

It is the top provider of visitors to the tourism industry, which earns 28 percent of gross domestic product and 90 percent of foreign exchange, with stays costing up to \$1,000 a night at paradise resorts on desert islands of pure-white beaches,



Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (R) and Maldives' President Mohamed Nasheed shake hands during the closing ceremony of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries meeting in Addu November 11, 2011. – Credit: Reuters/Dinuka Liyanawatte

palm trees and incomparably hued waters. Chinese tourist arrivals doubled year-on-year in 2010, according to the Maldives Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture. By September, this year's 146,668 visitors from China were well past 2010's total of 118,961.

"The Chinese can buy their way into this country. All they have to do is put out a travel advisory saying too many people are drowning and that's it, they will turn those tourists off like a tap," a senior Maldivian official said on condition of anonymity.

The China surge has been a godsend for tourism operators who traditionally rely on Europe and other Western countries for the bulk of visitors, but have seen those numbers fall with the downturn in developed-world economies and European debt crisis.

The Maldivian government wants "to maintain an appropriate balance between Maldives and India and other investors and not have any one country dominate them and exercise inordinate influence over them," a senior U.S. administration official told Reuters on

condition of anonymity.

The United States remains concerned, as does India, about China's plans in the Indian Ocean, the official said.

"I think it is important to try to continue to engage them, to stress opportunities for working together, and to stress the importance of them being as transparent as possible about what their economic and military intentions are," the official said.

The president, Nasheed, was unequivocal when asked how the Maldives would avoid becoming a pawn between Asia's giant rivals.

"We've made it very clear that India is our best friend and neighbor and we will continue along those lines," he told reporters, prompting immediate questions from journalists present from China's state media.

"There won't be any issue because of the Maldives' friendship with any other country," Nasheed said, smiling. (Additional reporting by Kritivas Mukherjee; Editing by John Chalmers and Alex Richardson)

Myanmar engagement "not about China," U.S. says

The U.S. decision to engage Myanmar should not be seen as an attempt to encircle or contain China and is a development that should be welcomed by Beijing, U.S. officials said.

After President Barack Obama announced he would send U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to Myanmar, U.S. officials emphasized that they would consult closely with China on the engagement with Myanmar.

Secretary Clinton is the first US secretary of state to visit Myanmar in more

than 50 years.

One U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said it is in China's interests to see Myanmar both stable and better integrated into the international community.

"It's about Burma (Myanmar), not about China," the official said.

Many analysts say Beijing is increasingly uneasy with what it sees as U.S. efforts to try to exert influence over countries around China. (Reporting by Caren Bohan, Editing by Jonathan Thatcher-Alertnet)

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Holy Land Tour



S. Raymond Rajabalan

One Land - Three Religions An experience of a life time

Where exactly is Holy land?

The Holy land referred to as Kingdom of Israel in Judaism is located at the extreme end of the Mediterranean. The term "Holy Land" is also used by Muslims and Christians to refer to the whole area in between the Jordan River and Mediterranean Sea. It is bounded on the north by Lebanon, on the East by Syria and Jordan on the south by Sinai desert

The Holy land is small in size but has played a great role in human history.

Part of the significance of the land stems from the religious significance of Jerusalem, the holiest city to Judaism, the place of Jesus' ministry, and the Isa and Mira event in Islam. The holiness of the land to Christianity was one of the motivational factors behind the efforts of the Crusades, which sought to win the Holy Land back from the Muslim Seljuk Turks that had conquered it from the Muslim Arabs, who had in turn conquered it from the Christian Byzantine Empire.

In modern times it has always been a land of unrest because its being the land of three great monotheistic faiths, and part of the



Mount of Olives

middle east ,which is the bridge between three continents .

This is the land where lie the ruins of the worlds most ancient civilizations, the land which throughout its long history was the meeting place between East and West. The land of the prophets and Jesus



Tour Map Of Holy Land



Church Of Mary Magdalene

Christ , who with their immortal teachings and laws directed the course of humanity towards justice and law by producing three monotheistic faiths Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

To the Jews this is the land of the bible and their past glories: to the Christians this is the land where Jesus lived ,the land which heard his mighty words and witnessed his miracles , this is the land where Jesus underwent suffering and was crucified: to the Moslems this is the land from which the prophet ascended to Heaven.

This land of faiths of love has also been a land of war, blood and misery. In fact no country in the world has a more dramatic history than Holy Land.

Our Tour to the Holy Land

This article attempts to provide detailed information about the significance of the various places the author and his wife recently visited the Holy Land.

The Mount Olives

The Mount of Olives is located east of Jerusalem .Its summit, which is about

300 feet higher than Jerusalem offers a magnificent view of the old city of Jerusalem and a striking panorama of the Judean Hills as far as the Dead Sea

Mount of Olives is venerated by Jews and Christians. For the Jews, the prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi are buried here. For the Christians, It is associated with some of the most important events in the life of Christ. Here Christ ascended into heaven, foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and taught his disciples Lord's Prayer. It is believed that Jesus will return to this place.

When we walked down the slope of Mount olives we saw the whole of Jerusalem .The panoramic view was simply breath taking and were absolutely mesmerized by the scenic beauty.

Pinnacle of the Temple

This is the southwest corner of the Temple Mount during Herod's time. It is believed by some that this is the Pinnacle of the temple

The large stones at the lower levels are actually Herodian Stones from the time of Christ. The Wailing Wall is also to the left along this wall. To the right and continuing

Holy Land Tour



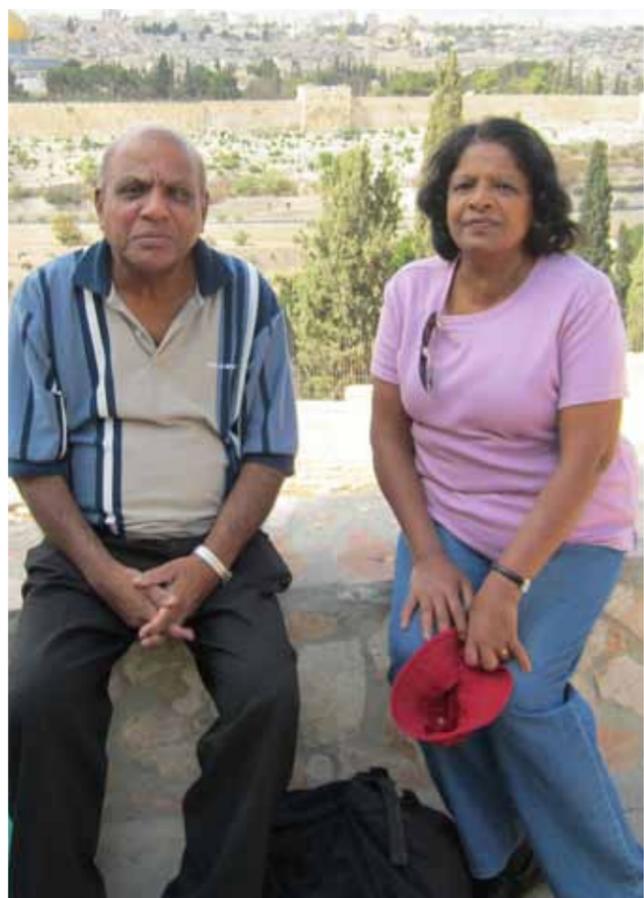
A Giant Olive Tree in the Garden of Gethsamne-more the 2000 yrs old



Dominus Flevit Church



Pinnacle of The Temple



Writer and his wife on the slopes of Mount Olives

to the south is the old City of David . The Kidron Valley is located behind the temple mount.

Many believe the southeast corner is the pinnacle, the place where Jesus was taken by Satan, who tempted him to jump off saying that the angels would protect him.

Church of Mary Magdalene

The Church of Mary Magdalene is a Russian Orthodox Church located on the Mount of Olives in the vicinity of the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem, Israel.

This elegantly constructed church is dedicated to Mary Magdalene, a follower of Jesus. According to the sixteenth chapter of the gospel of Mark, Mary Magdalene was the first to see Christ after his resurrection. (Mark 16:9) She is considered a crucial and important disciple of Jesus. The church was built in 1886 by Tsar Alexander III to honour his mother, Empress Maria Alexandrovna of Russia. It includes seven distinctive, gilded onion shaped domes.

Dominus Flevit church (Lord Wept Church)

Dominus Flevit is a Roman Catholic Church located on the Mount of Olives immediately facing the Old City of

Jerusalem.

Dominus Flevit, which translates from Latin as “The Lord Wept”, was fashioned in the shape of a teardrop to symbolize the tears of Christ. Here, according to the 19th chapter of the Gospel of Luke, Jesus, while walking toward the city of Jerusalem, becomes overwhelmed by the beauty of the Second Temple and predicting its future destruction, and the Diaspora of the Jewish people, weeps openly. (Luke 19:37-42)

Garden of Gethsemane

Gethsemane Garden located at the foot of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem most famous as the place where, according to Biblical texts, Jesus and his disciples are said to have prayed the night before Jesus’ crucifixion.

It was a very moving experience for us to stand so close to the very spot where Jesus Christ is said to have been arrested before being crucified.

Gethsemane is mentioned in the Greek of the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Mark. The name is derived from the Aramaic word Gaṭ-Šmānê, meaning “oil press”.

Apostles Matthew (26:36) and Mark (14:32) call it a place or estate. The Gospel of John says Jesus entered a garden with his disciples.

According to the New Testament it was a place that Jesus and his disciples customarily visited, which allowed Judas to find him on the night of his arrest

According to Luke 22:43-44, Jesus’ anguish in Gethsemane was so deep that “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” According to the Eastern Orthodox Church tradition, Gethsemane is the garden where the Virgin Mary was buried and was assumed into heaven.

(The writer who has extensively contributed a number of articles to Monsoon Journal feels that his recent travel to Israel on a Holy Pilgrimage was a great experience of a life time.

Monsoon Journal is pleased to publish a series of articles describing the various places visited by the writer - Managing Editor)

To be continued.....

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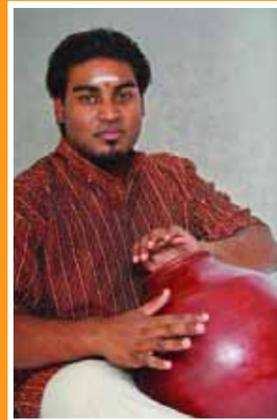
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Special Feature

SRI SATHYA SAI BABA'S 86TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



The Samadhi of Sai Baba was revealed on Guru Purnima 2011.



Rocking in a swing during a birthday celebration in the past.

Photos taken at Centre from Scarborough



By: Tashvir Narine

For the first time ever, devotees of Sri Sathya Sai Baba celebrated the birthday anniversary of their guru without his physical presence at Prashanti Nilayam, the ashram located in Andhra Pradesh, India. The mood from the ashram however, was certainly full of glory and celebrations; no different than all the years past when Sathya Sai Baba still physically witnessed the celebrations.

Sathya Sai Baba was born as Sathyanarayana Raju on November 23rd 1926 in the village of Puttaparthi to Easwaramma and Peddavenkamma Raju. Since his proclamation as being the reincarnation of the Sai Baba of Shirdi, his birthday has been a spiritual event worldwide. In the last few decades, devotees have flocked to Prashanti Nilayam to be part of the birthday festivities, which has evolved as the most celebrated festival amongst his devotees.

This year, festivities began on the 16th of November and each day a different programme was scheduled, all the way until November 23rd the birthday of Sathya Sai Baba. The events included everything a spiritual applicant could wish for, including musical concerts to chariot processions to drama scene musicals of Lord Rama and Lord Krishna, performed by students of Sai Baba.

On November 19th, Ladies' Day Celebrations were held by devotees of Sathya Sai Baba around the world. Beginning in 1995, Ladies' Day is an awakening for increased involvement of women in spiritual and worldwide proceedings. Also at this time, the 30th convocation ceremony of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSIHL) took place on November 21st. The SSIHL has been in operation since 1981 when it was instituted, providing free of cost education emphasizing education but

“ I do not accost one particular date in the calendar as My birthday, for I consider the day when Divinity blossoms in your heart as My birth-day in you. Therefore, each of you should individually celebrate such a day as My birthday. The day when you resolve to practice My advice, to follow My directives, to translate My message into acts of service, and to engage in spiritual discipline -- that day is My birthday for you. The 23rd day of November, which you now honor as the day on which I was born, is only like any other day if you celebrate it in a routine, ritual fashion. ”

SSSB Birthday Discourse 1975

also human values.

The actual birthday on November 23rd began in the morning with Veda chants and bhajans by Baba's students. In the evening, devotees were treated with two performances from worldwide maestros. The first was a due mandolin concert by U. Srinivas and U. Rajesh, who performed Carnatic style pieces for the crowd. Following this, a vocal performance was done by famous bhajan singer Anup Jalota, who lit up the halls of Prashanti

Nilayam with his typical enrapturing singing-style. During these performances, a swing carrying a photo of Sai Baba was rocked back and forth, similar to previous years where Baba himself would sit and listen to the birthday performances.

The inspiration of Sathya Sai Baba's teachings has resulted in devotees over 125 countries all across the globe. From Australia to Kenya to Venezuela, over 1200 Sai Centres dedicated to the messages of Sai Baba carry on his teachings today. Closer to home, Sathya Sai Baba's birth anniversary was also celebrated in style at the Sri Sathya Sai Centre of Scarborough, Canada. Officially opened in 2011, the mandir on Finch Avenue near Middlefield Road appropriately held the first celebration of Sai Baba's birthday in this new era. Devotees gathered for a small prayer session in the morning followed by a special evening programme, similar to the structure at Prashanti Nilayam. The ceremony was a grande success and was well attended, estimating crowds to be around 1200 devotees for the evening function. Sathya Sai Baba departed the physical world on April 24th Easter Sunday after his body ceased to fight the arising cardio-respiratory complications. He was 85 calendar years old at the time and devotees were saddened to learn of this undertaking. Skeptics used this time to point out that Sathya Sai Baba was incorrect in proclaiming that he would live until 96 years old. However Hindu scholars have also researched and learned that Sathya Sai Baba actually lived to this age, if one was to look at the lunar calendar instead. While he also predicted that another reincarnation will take place 8 years after his death as Prema Sai Baba, devotees of Sathya Sai Baba continue to celebrate his praises with strong hearts and immense devotion worldwide, showing that he still lives on through them.

OM SAI RAM

Short Story



By: C. Kamalaharan

The marriage hall displayed a festive look, with colourful decorations of flowers, crepe papers and balloons of different hues. It was a hive of activity since dawn. The bride's party was decked out in all their finery, the men in 'verty, shirt and shawl' while the women in bridal sarees, 'suridhars' and richly adorned with glittering jewellery. The infants and children too were in their best suits.

The guests attractively dressed for the occasion, were warmly received at the entrance and led to their seats. The priests were busy rushing through the final touches to the arrangements at the 'nuptial throne', the caterers were serving snacks and drinks, both hot and cold to the guests as they arrived and took

IN SEARCH OF A BRIDE!

their seats and the 'nathaswaram' artistes were entertaining the gathering, by their enthralling performance of yesterday's mellifluous film hits, interspersed with the present day lyrically incomprehensible 'rock' music.

The master of ceremonies, Thurai with 'silk 'verty' tied around his bulging belly and wearing a variegated 'batik' shirt was on his toes, coordinating the arrangements. Just then he caught sight of Siva, a native of his village passing by, held his hand, took him to a corner and whispered into his ears, "a highly educated boy has accompanied the bridegroom from U.K. He is on the lookout for a suitable bride for him. I have presented a clear profile of your daughter, Rani and I am sure it will match his expectations. His response too seems favourable. I know his parents who are also from our village and so I could convince them and push the matter through". "Well, how about the boy?" He is the son of Somu, who runs a grocery store opposite our vegetable market. The boy had gone to U.K six years ago, to pursue his studies and having completed, has got a good job there." "O.K, I will think about it and let you know" replied Siva and moved away. But Thurai hurried behind, got hold of him and reminded, "look here, he'll be here for only two weeks, so act quickly, or else you'll miss the bus, as there are many in the fray, eyeing him"

Just then there was a commotion among the guests, as news went around, informing the arrival of the bridegroom. The next of kin of the bride's party and their close relatives and friends, hurried up to the entrance to receive him. The 'nathaswaram' artistes swung into action. After the traditional welcome, the bridegroom was led into the hall; affair, handsome and towering personality followed by the retinue of his relatives and

friends. Subash, the prospective bridegroom from U.K, followed them at a distance, in order to be conspicuous. He was fabulously dressed in black suit, not withstanding the sweltering heat of the mid-day Chennai; adark, stout guy sporting an ecstatic smile. His eyes were surveying the crowd, especially the ladies, in a bid to locate his 'bride to be', recalling the description of her, as detailed by Thurai.

Meanwhile news had already leaked about Subash's sudden visit to Chennai. There was much speculation about the status of the lad. However, being a U.K citizen and leading an enhanced life, there was heavy demand for him. Those having marriageable daughters had already cast an eye on Subash and had even approached Thurai, the broker. And

so Subash became the cynosure of the assemblage. Puffed up with pride, Subash took his 'Canon' and began 'shooting' the ladies in a bid to 'hunt down' his 'bride to be'.

The wedding ceremony in progress was also arranged by Thurai; the bride having arrived from Srilanka and the bridegroom from U.K. In order to maintain his refugee status in U.K Subash refrained from entering Srilanka. For such couples, India being in close proximity to Srilanka, is the most convenient place to conduct such marriages. Subash too was on a similar footing. So his short visit was to 'hook' a bride and fly away to U.K. When asked for the dowry he expected, the prompt reply was, "her beautiful face is my dowry". He not only refused a dowry but also was prepared to foot the bill, for the entire expenses of the wedding.

Siva was not lured by these 'baits' Hailing from a respectable family, he was keen to find a well educated, a well mannered and a presentable boy, from a good 'stock'. He wasn't in a hurry, but was very cautious in this matter, making careful inquiries whenever he received proposals. Though they were from the same village, Siva and Thurai were not intimate companions. Thurai couldn't proceed beyond the G.C.E O/L and so he took over his father's farming. He was thriving well in this venture, But as the situation in Srilanka took a bad turn, he fled to Chennai and settled there with his family and did social work; arranging marriages, transporting tourists, helping in financial transactions, shopping and etc. Siva on the other hand was a retired teacher, and a well respected man in society. He too fled to Chennai with his family and settled there.

In order to be the focus of attention, Subash in an upbeat mood moved close to

the 'nuptial throne' and stood there facing the guests, with the hope that he could easily spot Rani, his 'bride to be'. Failing to find her he approached Thurai and requested him to show him where Rani was seated. Thurai, fearing that Subash might upset the whole thing by his momentary rash behaviour, avoided revealing the place. But Subash continued to press Thurai to show her. To free himself from the repeated botheration, Thurai at last revealed the place where Rani was seated. Moving swiftly Subash managed to get a seat a few rows in front of her. Zooming and clicking his camera, he tried all possible means to attract her.



But Rani was totally unaware of his presence and went on enjoying the company of her friends, talking and laughing. Siva who had been following Subash's movements, got terribly wild at the boy's indecent behaviour, but he had to restrain himself as he didn't want to create a scene that would impair his good image in society.

Meanwhile marriage brokers whose main concern was the brokerage, were busy trying to impress upon Subash, with the list of prospective brides they had, "I have an angel of a girl for you, thamby", said one, "she is a beauty queen", said another and so they went on. Having decided to marry Rani, he turned down all the other proposals.

After the main event of the ceremony—the tying of the knot (Thaali) and the other related ceremonies that followed, the guests were led into the adjoining hall where food was laid in readiness. The blessing of the couple too took place simultaneously. Finally with the posing of the group photograph with the couple, the guests began to leave the hall. Siva and daughter, Rani too got ready to depart. Subash on noticing this, rushed towards Thurai and in a state of excitement said, "they are leaving, why don't you introduce me to them, she is the girl I was looking for". Thurai replied, "this is a matter that should be dealt tactfully and not in a hurry". "But, there isn't time, I am returning to U.K in two weeks time, before that.....", he dragged on. "O.K, I'll take you to their house which is close by and settle the matter". "When?" "Today itself".

Siva and daughter returned home in the scorching sun and after a quick body

wash and dress change, Siva settled on bed for his usual after lunch siesta while Rani settled down to read the novel, she had read halfway. Hardly had Siva sunk into deep slumber, the door bell rang in two consecutive pressings. "Who the dammit could it be", heretorted, in a fit of rage. Then followed another pressing of the bell. Hearing the third bell Siva rolled out of bed and rushed to the main door and opened it wrathfully. What an unexpected shock! Thurai and Subash stood there with a feeling of guilt. Thurai started to blabber something which Siva couldn't understand. Restraining his anger and as a matter of courtesy, he invited them into his house and offered them seats in the living room. Subash in his usual behavioral instinct, began to peer around to have a glimpse of Rani, who never came out.

Thurai led Siva to the backyard and before he could begin, Siva in a severe tone began, 'what's all these! you have brought the boy all of a sudden without informing me.' "No the boy is expected to return to U.K in two weeks time, as he has to attend a high level conference of executives", replied Thurai. "So what! you think you can rush through the matter and settle it according to your wish. Look! I don't like such nonsense and I do not entertain such people either. Don't you know how marriages conducted in haste have been misfired, that too by unscrupulous youths from abroad, preying on the gullibility of innocent people. And this boy, I have observed him to be a playboy. Take him away."

Thurai being subdued, followed Siva into the living room and took his seat. S. Siva took a seat beside Subash and asked him, "what are doing in U.K thamby?" Subash seemed unruffled pulled out his purse from his coat pocket, drew his visiting card and handed it to Siva saying, "here it is uncle". His name Subash was followed by the abbreviations M.A,B.E. Siva presumed that the boy must have toiled hard to earn a double degree. But how could it be! he doubted! an arts degree and an engineering degree!. To clear that he posed the next question, "what do the abbreviations M.A and B.E stand for?" Subash erected himself from the reclining position in the sofa and with a stylist English accent said, "Member of the Association of Business Executives". Siva's head went spinning for a while and later steadying himself, he cast a stern look at Thurai who turned the other way and remained speechless for a while. Later casting a pathetic look at Subash he shook his head, conveying that the matter was over.

Severely browbeaten, both of them rose from their seats and left the room. As they reached the gate Thurai stammered, "we shall see you later" and left the place, never to return.

Short Story



Magician's Dance

ORIGINAL IN TAMIL by T. AGILAN
ENGLISH VERSION BY THURAIYOORAN

I still remember the blue bag in which I carried my books in grade one and our teacher Miss. Murugupillai and the olive tree in our school. These are drawings inscribed in my mind. But more than all these, I still had a special place for him in my mind. His nickname was rabbit. He had big ears like that of a rabbit, hence the nickname. He never bothered about being called by his nickname. He took it very lightly and never got angry.

The first day at school was a day of crying and fear for every one. Each one was looking at others in the class and was crying. I was also in that mood the first day. "Why are you all crying? Don't cry." all the teachers were telling this to the students. We were crying for no plausible reason. May be this was a ploy to go home. This was the scene in all grade ones. Some of them were seen holding to their parents hands tightly and crying. They were adamant in going into the class.

Later on we were most of the time at school, celebrating Saraswathy pooja, preparing stage for concerts and decorating the hall for parties etc. I used to think of the first day at school and laugh to myself. I still remember that as I entered the class on the first day, I was not crying but on seeing others crying, I also started to cry. I was not worried on sitting on the ground and never thought of the shorts I was wearing then getting dirty. Later in higher forms we used to clean the chairs with our handkerchiefs before sitting, so that our pants don't get dirty.

I was holding on to my book bag tightly on the assumption, others may steal it. This was because of the instructions from my older sister, who told me to be careful of the books, pencil and the note book and all these to be brought home safely. In the same way another boy was also holding his bag tightly to his chest. His bag was also of blue color like that of mine. So I looked at him in amazement. He also looked at me. Both looked at each other and smiled. That was the beginning of our friendship. That was my first time, smiling at a stranger. I had all my relatives living down our lane. Cousins, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters all living as neighbors. So every activity of mine was with them. Never had a chance to play with friends. Because I never had any friends to play with.

We were looking at each other and at our bags until lunch break. Our teacher told us take out the lunch packs. Inside the book bag there will be a lunch pack

and a water bottle. Mostly bread and Jam or pittu and omelette. My Mum wanted me to avoid the trouble of washing the lunch pack and always gave bread with jam. That was later. But on the first day, I never took anything. Teacher was going round looking at the lunch of everyone. She asked "Ramesh, what did you bring for lunch?". I came to

and sat near him and shared my lunch with him. This strengthened our friendship. Every morning all of us were delighted to tell good morning to teachers, as they approached the classrooms. We had a new technique in saying good morning. We waited till others finish their greeting and started after and said it loudly and showed our control of the whole situation. One day Miss. Murugupillai put an end to our technique and made us angry. So that evening we hid our selves behind a bush

and ran away. We were playing with girls that time without showing any difference of boys and girls.

I shaved my head on the thirty first day of my father's death and went to school next day. Aiyngaran one of my class mates ridiculed me as a 'bold headed baby.' During lunch break, I started beating him assisted by Vinothan. After that he joined us, as a group member and three of us had hey days at school. We were engaged in so many tricks without being caught by the teachers or the vic-



Classroom in Eastern Province, Sri Lanka-July 2011 – Pic by : UNICEF

know his name as Ramesh on that day. Since I did not bring anything I was ready to cry as a self-defence. This was my practice even at home. When I break something or for some mischief, I used to cry before someone start beating or yelling at me. He took a box with cookies and showed it to the Teacher. When my turn came up I started crying. Teacher came to me and said not to cry and wiped my tears. She told me that boys should not cry and this made me to remember the fact that I am a male for ever. He took out a cookie from his box and held it towards me. That day I broke the rule of my mother that I should not accept anything from strangers.

That evening I went home and demanded, that I should be given lunch everyday without fail and took it next day to school. During lunch break went

and shouted "murukkupillai" and ran away. But she saw him running and punished him the next day. He never told her that, I too was with him in shouting and saved me and showed his true friendship.

We had our lunch during lunch break, throughout the first year and after that we started eating bit by bit during class, without the teacher noticing it. During the lunch break we were playing with the tennis ball. We were playing a game called "sambol". We had two teams and aimed the ball at the other team members and if hit by the ball he was declared out and had to leave the team. We used to laugh at people who twisted their body when hit by the ball. This became a popular game and later girls also joined with us. When they sometime called us as 'boys', we used to get angry and hit them

tims never complained to the teachers. Hence we were free from any type of punishment. Also we scored good marks in the tests and were in the good books of teachers. We were the people who brought sticks to the teachers and not the people receiving beatings.

One day Rameshe's mom committed suicide and he was very much depressed. On the day of his mother's funeral he rolled on the ground and cried. It was unbearable to him. Students who ridiculed him for doing that, were well beaten up by Vinothan and myself. We found out that terrorism originates, when you are ridiculed. So violence became our weapon to defend ourselves. There were other bullies in the class, who got into difficulties daily and ended up in Principal's room. When we were in Grade



Short Story

five our classmate Nayagi performed a Magician's dance at our school concert. After that I used to bully her by calling as the fearful Magician. Ramesh stopped me from doing that and later I found out he had a soft corner for her. Not that he was in love, but a special affection for her. At that age we never new what love was, except that it was a special kind of affection.

When we went on an excursion, he let me sit near the window in the bus. We were together during temple festivals tasting ice cream. On their festival day at the temple, he brought lots of bananas and vadais and we went to the field and had a feast. When we went on another temple excursion three of us took a picture with Mr. Sethupathy teacher. Later we found out that we had something common among us. That was we all had lost one of our parents. This we thought as a common bond which brought us pride. Our science teacher put zinc into sulfuric acid and produced hydrogen and filled a balloon with it. He told us to write the name of the school on a card and attach it to the balloon and allow it to fly. Secretly we wrote our names on it too.

When the army moved into our town, we were in grade eight. So we moved to Kanagarayankulam and I thought he moved with his grand-father to another place. I was not willing to join the school in that village and my mother never forced me to join. This remains still a mystery to me. Then, when the army got out of Omantahi, we moved to Mallavi. Within four years we moved to four houses and three villages. I never wanted to go to schools there. At last we came back to skanthapuram and was happy to see my school functioning but with less number of students. I was happy to see Vinothan at school. But no one knew where 'Rabbit' was. We talked about him now and then.

When we were in grade ten we heard the news that Nayagi eloped with someone and I was reminded of him. We never took anything for lunch but bought bun and tea at the school canteen. One day while eating bun I thought of him. I remember him stealing one hundred rupee note from his father's shop and got caught to the canteen Manager, when we tried to pay for the bun and tea we bought at the canteen. It is very rare to have a five rupee note at that time, when you are a student. So the Manger got suspicious and reported to our Teacher, who told him to bring his father next day. So he was upset. I devised a plan and told him to inform the teacher that your father is attending the Traders meeting and unable to come. That was a Friday and assured him that the teacher will forget about this over the week end. It worked out well and he bought me cup ice cream on Monday evening.

After some time Vinothan also left for Switzerland. I met his mother and she confirmed it. I never asked for his phone number since she may think that I may ask him for money. You can't blame her



There are approximately 40,000 widows in the North and 46,000 in the Eastern Province, Sri Lanka – AsiaNews.it

because, once our people get their numbers, they ask them for money, thinking that they pluck money from a tree. I spent my time here and there without any proper education. We heard that we can go back to Kilinochchi. That time I started writing poems. Also met friends who were interested in literature and writing. At times, I thought of Vinothan and 'rabbit'. I have forgotten his real name.

We went back to Kilinochchi. The school's olive tree was found with only two branches and in a semi alive position. The school was filled with rubbles and was in pieces. The land and houses lost their identity. Land mines were removed from and around our houses. I became a reporter. I tried to write poems on the destruction of our place and failed .But captured the ruins in my camera. Many skeletons were displayed for identification. I went there to gather news. There was lots of crying and a tense situation prevailed. Suddenly 'are you brother Agilan?' a girl asked me. I said "Yes". 'I am Suganya, Rameshe's sister' she replied. I felt ashamed for not in apposition to identify her. I asked her, "Where are you staying? Where is Ramesh? Who accompanied you? non stop without paying attention to her tears on the eyes." We moved to our grandfather's place at Puththuvadduvan. One day grandpa got out to see our house in Kilinochchi not listening to anyone, who dissuaded from going. My brother also went with him. Both never returned home." She said.

I went to the place with her, where they had all skeletons arranged for identification. My mind was praying not to see their skeletons, expecting them to be in a prison. Suddenly she shouted "Anna (brother)". I saw a a skeleton of a fourteen year old boy and by the side was a man's skeleton. Immediately I remem-

bered his rabbit ears. She was crying and was holding my legs. I released her hands and came out of the place quickly. I was wondering what to do. Got on to my motor bicycle and came to our school

olive tree in a decaying state. The tree was standing there without any motion. I felt like crying. No one was around me. Hence unable to hold my grief any more, cried out loud.

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Short Story



By: SIVAGAMI

This time of the year: the sun light reflects on the thawing snow, making everything bright and silvery white; the sound of water splashing in to the drainage is music to the ears; light green sprouts rear their pretty heads every where; people open their windows in their high rise buildings to let the fresh air in; it's time the heaters went off; it's really rejuvenating.

A small group of people, friends and family of Kala and Haran, were busy putting up some balloons, ribbons and all-purpose banner for felicitations. Their only son, Balaraj, was coming back after graduating from medical school in Granada to start the residency in Toronto. At last the years of toil and sacrifice were over for the parents.

help redeem the debts.

Armed with Balaraj's horoscope, Haran and Kala approached a local marriage brokerage: a one stop brokerage where package deals were offered; that included horoscope matching, services of a priest, wedding planning and registration, and honey moon travels.

"Looking for a beautiful, fair, educated Hindu girl between 20 & 24 years of age for a 27 year old doctor; not a difficult one, I would say; did you bring any photos of the boy?"

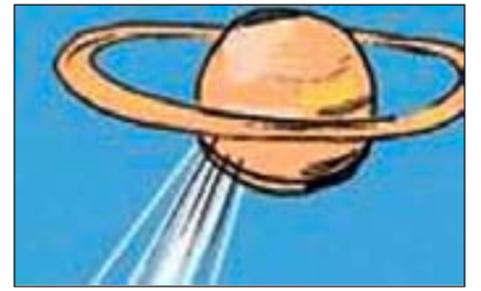
"We have the graduation photo"

"Wonderful, the first impression is always important, you see; let me see, dashing hansom man--- not very fair and not very tall, I assume, am I right?"

"A little fairer than appearing in the picture;" Kala nudged Haran and Haran remained silent.

focused and involved in his noble profession, nevertheless they pleaded with him to get engaged at least, as most of the girls were willing to wait two years until he finished his residency.

To every one's surprise one weekend Balaraj announced that he was ready for not only engagement but marriage itself. By fluke or by deliberation, he chose the daughter of a successful businessman in the meat industry in Toronto. She was not only rich, but held a good position in the investment banking and beautiful too. Balaraj's parents were ecstatic; Kala praised the Richmond Temple Deity and fulfilled her vow by providing a miniature deity in gold. They also went back to the famous horoscope reader, whom they've been frequently visiting for the last two years, to check one more time the matching percentage.



THE KARMA

Ever since they came to Toronto from Srilanka, both Haran and Kala had only one goal: making their only child a doctor; to that end they were willing to sacrifice everything. They stayed on in the one bedroom with den when their friends were buying houses; always had two jobs and never went on vacations; and never even had a party in their apartment until now. Even after saving every penny, they were in deep debt for having to pay for the medical school, but they had no regrets; after all they were proud to have their dream realized. They claimed, they wouldn't hesitate, if they were to do it again. Balaraj, to their great pride, was always a well-mannered, obedient child who got good grades throughout his high school; but unfortunately he couldn't get into the Canadian medical schools; hence ended up going to the Caribbean.

The bare minimum furniture and the makeshift partition to make a room out of the den, bespoke their frugality. Kala had made all the dishes herself for the occasion and decided to stay back to tend to the last minute details, when Haran went to pick the son up at the airport. It wasn't a surprise party in the traditional sense, but nonetheless it was a great surprise for Balaraj; he never saw his parents crying, especially out of joy, nor did he ever receive this much adoration from his family before; they showered him with presents and his father presented him with an expensive Rolex watch. At the end, the event turned out to be a memorable one for Balaraj.

The people that attended the party, all sighed with great relief, that Balaraj came alone; unlike many who brought black girl friends along. The parents insisted that he was well brought up, and wouldn't do such things. But the people warned them, not to let their guard down, for there was always a risk of losing your cash cow to a white trash. They suggested, a suitable engagement would ward off unwanted entanglements and assure a reasonable dowry that would

"He looks more like you; apple doesn't fall far from the tree, so people say"

"Hehehe---- you are funny" Kala was beaming with pride.

"What are absolute musts and what are negotiable?; musts first; ----horoscope match, ok; education, ok; age, ok;-- then I assume the height, looks and complexion are negotiable; how about the dowry?; ---ok, you say dowry is a must; let me explain; we can not demand dowry, but we can put it delicately like what the parents are willing to give to their daughter or we can even look for some one with good earning potential"

"Our son knows how much sacrifice we made to put him through the medical school; he's a good kid, he won't let us down" Kala was unambiguously optimistic.

"So, let me work on these specifications and give you a call; nice meeting you both, and this is my card; thank you for trusting us"

Six months of horse-trading narrowed the list down to a few prospective brides; all satisfied above and beyond what was asked for and it was time to take it to the next level. At the request of their families the girls agreed to go on blind dates with Balaraj. But Balaraj, on the other hand, wouldn't make any time for the meetings, he was always busy with the residency and hardly had time for anything else. After so much of cajoling, Balaraj finally agreed to meet the girls under one condition; that he wouldn't marry until he finished his four year residency. After each and every date, Balaraj's parents would be anxiously waiting for some good news, but it never came for a long time. The brokerage also tried their best to provide new faces, but nothing would click. Almost two years had passed, but there was no light at the end of the tunnel, so to speak, and finally Balaraj's family, disappointed and dejected, sat down with their son to get to the bottom of the problem, what ever it may be. They concluded that he was too



"I told you when the time comes, things will automatically fall in place; even if you stand on your head, you can't change the fate; these are all written thousands of years before his conception---his Karma"

"You are right; but what else do you expect from the parents?; we couldn't help our anxieties"

"Listen, your son's horoscope is one of a kind; belongs to a soul in pursuit of knowledge; marriage and family are all secondary; you are so lucky because the sudden turn of Saturn this time made

this possible, otherwise this soul would have been a life-long bachelor; don't ever forget to pay the tribute to the Saturn on Saturdays"

"We want you to check again the compatibility and their future"

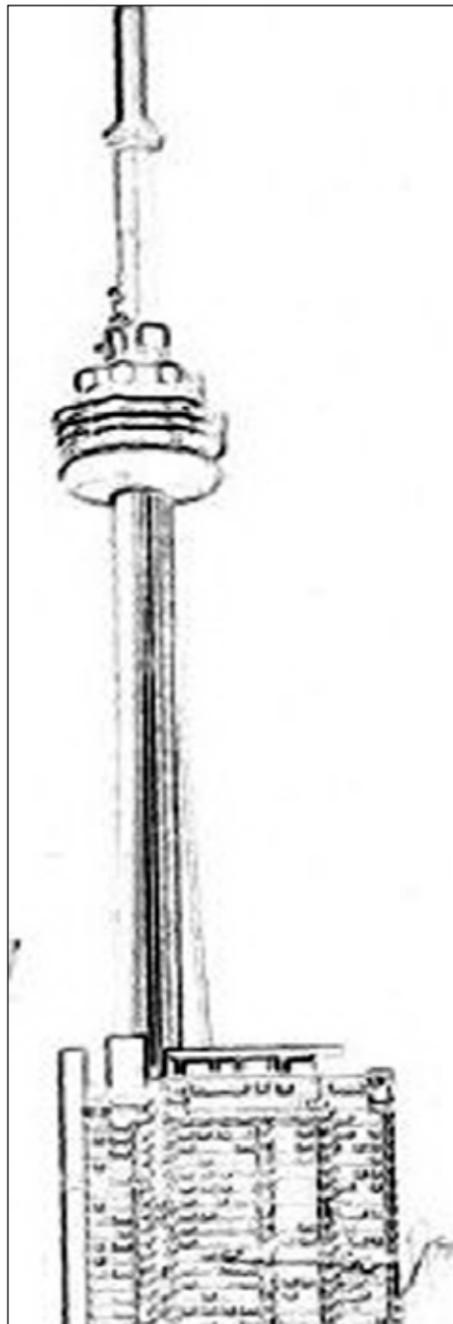
"You can't get anything more compatible than this; this is like heaven intervened; but only one drawback, your son's horoscope lacks strength for offsprings; but, you know, you can't have everything in life, but there are ways to work around it; we will deal with it should the need arise"

Short Story



Every happy occasion must have a killjoy; and Kala's cousin turned out to be the designated one for this family; she raised an archaic issue in this day and age --- the caste of the bride. When Haran said it was irrelevant especially in Canada, she argued it was the most important aspect of Hindu tradition. When Haran told it was impossible to ask or trace, she pointed out it was just a matter of a call to Srilanka. So did the call go and came the bad news. When Haran tried to blame the brokerage, they in turn sternly reminded him of the Canadian non- discriminatory policies; but being so accommodative, they redirected his concern to their designated Hindu priest.

"Under the Hindu canon, even heinous crimes have ways of being redressed; but one's caste should not be trifled with; it is a Karma the soul has to go through in it's current birth" the priest explained what was at stake.



"So there is no way you can get around this, Swamy?; because almost everything is ready for the wedding; and this is like an intrusion of a bear in the middle of a Shiva Puja"

"I understand your predicament, I don't know what to say;---- listen, I feel terrible, especially for the girl,---- well, it's not considered a sin, if it's done for the sake of bringing a girl ashore; although, as a result, I might incur bad Karma myself; but I'm willing to do;----



there is an old saying, that it's ok to tell thousand lies, if that can accomplish one marriage; and mind you, we are not doing anything of that sort here"

"What are you saying, Swamy?; I'm really confused"

"I'm willing to adopt her in to our family"

"She's a grown up independent woman, and from a rich family too; how to adopt at this stage, Swamy?"

"No, no-- I didn't mean to literally adopt her, are you crazy?; what I meant is to satisfy our religious traditions;--- through Hindu rituals I may be able to bring her in to the Brahminical fold to lift her up from her lower status; that's all"

"How do we do that, Swamy?; how to convince her and the family?"

"You don't have to tell any details, simply tell the family to show up for a special puja, lets call it Ganesh puja, and I'll take it from there"

The bride's family threw an extravagant wedding, yet a few close relatives of the groom, even after learning about the last minute Ganesh Puja, didn't attend due to sudden illnesses; but in private they admitted their fear about the marriage prospects of their unmarried daughters, had they attended the wedding. But all in all, it was considered, a marriage made in heaven. When the bride's father bought a water front luxury condo in downtown Toronto for the couple, the same horoscope reader and the priest were called upon to sanctify the place.

Many moons and many, many more pujas later, the horoscope predicted smooth sail faced an unpredicted thunder-storm, and it quickly evolved into a hurricane. It was strange enough, a black man of African descent confronted the couple in their gated condo lobby; it was even stranger when he started arguing with Balaraj and later Balaraj would brush aside the whole incident as mistaken identity and refused to file complaints with the condo security. This was followed by calls between a lawyer and Balaraj; and when questioned he trivialized it as some extortion attempt from Grenada. The real blow came when Haran was named in a lawsuit alleging money laundering and aiding an extortion. Haran's lawyer was as clueless as Haran and Kala for sometime, but after delved deep in to the case he got the link to the lawyer representing Balaraj; and then the whole affair started unravelling. After receiving more information from the lawyers representing more than one plaintiff, they decided to have a consoli-



dated defense to answer the allegations. They all met in the downtown office of one of their lawyers.

"There are numerous allegations against you, Dr. Balaraj and Mr. Haran; we will deal with each individually, and we need your full cooperation"

"I can't believe this is happening to us, must be a mistake; I'm sure it's all because of this recent change in planetary positions"

What?; Mr. Haran, what are you talking about?; please listen carefully, these are serious allegations"

Ok, ok explain to me what this is all about"

"Let's start with the minor one, Dr. Balaraj, two women are alleging that you are criminally negligent in child support and asking for back child support for years; and we know we already lost the paternity challenge on both; and I have to tell you this is a reportable violation to the medical licensing board of Canada; you have anything to say for this"

"I like to challenge the results of those paternity tests again"

"Ok, there are two serious allegations; first, one of the women claims that you are still legally married to her, she alleges that you married her in a church wedding, and if that legally holds-- because we don't know it's legality-- then you may face laws of bigamy; you have anything to say"

"Look, she was my girl friend at that time, and we did a stupid thing, we exchanged rings in front of a Baptist priest, its not like we had a big church wedding as she claims; it's really stupid"

"I hope they won't produce any documentations corroborating entries in to their local marriage registry and also photo evidence of your marriage"

"I don't recall doing anything like

that"

"Let's deal with the final and the most serious allegation, the suit alleges that you hired a person to threaten these ladies and try to buy their silence; and in one case it says, you forced her to give unconditional divorce; if anyone comes forward to testify against you and if they can prove your involvement with evidence, then this can earn jail sentence and you will lose your medical license"

"These are all fabrications, aren't they?" Kala couldn't keep her composure any longer.

"We don't know madam, we are compelled to answer and defend; and coming to your case, Mr. Haran, the money trail allegedly to this hit man apparently links you with him, because you have wire transferred large sums of money to this person; do you have any explanations?"

"Honestly, I thought I was sending the money for my son's medical school, I had no idea that he was having this much extra- curricular activities"

"I told time and time again that you should have taken the Manipal medical school in India; you were standing on one leg to go to the Caribbean; now see what has happened; these black people will do anything through their black magic; you can never trust them" Kala was wailing in the background.

"One of the girls brother tried to intimidate me in the lobby of our downtown condo, I think I should press charges"

"We had looked in to that already, remember, Dr. Balaraj, you had told the security that it was a mistaken identity"

"See, see, I told you these black people are capable of anything, they are the worst in my opinion" no one could subdue Kala.

"With all due respect Mrs. Haran, I notice you keep calling them black and somewhat derisively, but correct me if I'm wrong, aren't you all look the same?"

"No, not at all, even the educated people make the same mistake; we are brown, we are not black, if you look closely you will see the difference; ---don't you ever call us black"

"Mom, let's not argue about who is black and who is brown, please"

That time of the year: when red, yellow and orange supplant green; the crisp cool air rustles brown leaves on the ground and then leaps up to caress the exposed body parts; then transforms in to howling wind that will bounce off double pane windows of the high rise buildings; the apartments will feel chilly; yet it's not time for the heaters to come on.

The superintendent of the building came prepared for a huge task; Haran and Kala had vacated their apartment after thirty years, but to his surprise the apartment was relatively in good condition. It was clean and empty except for a few hundred yellow books stacked in the corner. Out of curiosity he glanced through them, they were all written in some foreign language with timings, numbers, charts and Zodiac signs, dating back for thirty years. He hesitated for a moment as to what to do with them, and then tossed them in to the garbage.

Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham



An Experience Participating in Ajax Santa Claus Parade

By: Meena Shanmuganathan

Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham was pleased to take part in the Ajax Santa Claus Parade for the 3rd year in a row. It is a time for love, joy, and most importantly: spending time with family and friends. That is exactly what I did to kick off the Christmas season on November 12th. I went to my friend's house, and together with family, we spent countless hours decorating the TCASD float for the 2011 Ajax Community Santa Claus Parade.

As a kid, I would love to sit in the float and wave to people as we go by. Now as a youth the opportunity to decorate the float gave my friends and I a chance to express our creativity.

Also, when looking at our beautiful float in the night with the coloured lights and all, I was proud to say that I was one of the six people who decorated the float. The final product was amazing: candy cane lights, the inflatable snowman, miniature reindeers and sleighs,

wreaths, a dazzling Christmas tree, and so much more. After so much hard work on a sunny Saturday, I couldn't wait for the parade to begin!

Finally, it was time for the parade to commence. When I arrived at Mackenzie Road, I was dumbfounded at the crowd that was lining up on the streets to watch. The other floats surprised me as well. We were float number 67 out of 70 floats in total! It just got better and better from there. Just three floats away was Santa Claus himself, waiting to check if all boys and girls have been naughty or nice!

Bundled up in mitts, scarves, hats, and matching silk tops, my friends and I were put in charge of handing out candy and watching the kids walking in front of us. Maybe half an hour or so passed when my friend suggested that we sing Christmas carols.

So we sang. This turned out to be a fabulous idea because as the older kids sang, the younger ones joined in cheerful-



ly and to my astonishment, all the moms and dads. Not just the families in TCASD, but the spectators as well. I watched as parents held their children closely and sang Christmas favourites in unison with us. Oh, what a night!

This year's Ajax Community Santa

Claus Parade was remarkable. It was my first time being in the Ajax parade, and it was great! In my opinion, the best part was when I waved to everyone watching and they waved back! I will never forget this day and can't wait for next year! Merry Christmas everyone!



Halloween Fun

On Saturday October 12, 2011 we had a Halloween carnival at the Mclean library. It was fun for the little kids. They can interactive with the story telling. They did many things like bat bracelets, pumpkin carving, word searches, face painting and many more. Last but not least the Halloween joke book. The author of this book came in and told us many things about her book. A girl also got the first copy of her book. We all had a wonderful time.

By Sanoch





Durham Tamil Association

Durham Tamil Association's 10th Annual Youth Festival Proudly presented by the Tamil Youth of Durham

This is the first year our youth festival was planned, designed, trained, and executed from start to finish by our youth. Adult volunteers proudly helped the youth. Our VP Kanga Sivanathan was instrumental in obtaining sponsors. We thank all our sponsors for their generous and continued support. Over a 100 kids from tiny tots and youth participated in this well attended program. Program included an classical instrumental orchestra by Lasanthi teacher, several dances by kids trained by our youth from hip hop to classical to Ghana ,Super Singers style Mixed Melodies & of course tiny tots as Durham Little Superstars.

The Theme was DTA' got talent. Youth judges (our kids who are graduates and holding jobs the DTA alumni came back to help us with the youth festival) determined and commented on each of the programs. Dignitaries, included Hon. MP for Ajax Pickering Chris Alexander's message delivered by Shashi Bhatia Chair of Indo Canada Association, also, in attendance were Hon. MPP for Ajax Pickering Joe Dickson, Hon. MPP for Pickering Scarborough East Tracy MacCharles, Hon. Mayor Steve Parish Town of Ajax, Councillor Renrick Ashby, Hon. Mayor Dave Ryan City of Pickering, Councillors Doug Dickerson, Jennifer O'Connell. In his inagural speech DTA's President Josh Suresh thanked everyone and conveyed with passion & conviction: "Lets unite to make a better tomorrow for all of us".

DTA presented its second annual University to a well deserved youth Delany Kandiah, scholarships are awarded thanks to the annual donation of Mr. Ganeshan Appudurai and Josh Suresh.

Hon. MP for Ajax-Pickering, Mr. Chris Alexander delivered an important message: "My first duty is to congratulate the organizers for this evening. Youth are our future, and it is our duty to develop and showcase their talents. As Sir John A Macdonald, our first Prime

Minister once said, Canada's only "aristocracy is one of merit and virtue." But we do live in fascinating times. Our country remains vibrant. But uncertainty and spiraling debt rule in too many countries. In this difficult context, it is our duty to be disciplined, to work hard and play by the rules, to be generous to those in need and principled in the face of mistaken policies, abuses or threats to world peace. As Prime Minister Harper said at the recent Commonwealth Summit, Canada will not attend the next one in Colombo unless the government of Sri Lanka investigates and puts a stop to recent crimes, and takes genuine steps towards reconciliation. My thoughts are with you as you celebrate the achievements of your community and of the youth of Durham - our shared future! Thank you once again for including me in tonight's proceedings. You have greetings and best wishes from our government, our prime minister and ministers and from this admiring MP. Very warmest regards to you all!

Upcoming events:

- DTA's Ladies club event on Dec 4th. from 4-7 PM at OPG Info Centre 1675 Montgomery Park Rd in Pickering. Topic " Beauty makeover" hands on makeup session/ skin care and techniques for self grooming. All are welcome, free admission.

- Kids XMas Party, fun filled event with Santa arriving with lots of gifts Dec 11th 5-7 PM at OPG Info Centre 1675 Montgomery Park Rd in Pickering All are welcome, free admission.

WE WISH YOU A MERRY X'MAS, HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR 2012

Our sincere thanks to members of DTA and Monsoon Journal for your continued support for Durham Tamils.

Durham Tamil Associaton, proudly serving Durham since 2000.

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DTA's Adopt a Park Initiavite in Partnership with City Of Pickering

On November 24, 2011, City of Pickering Honoured Durham Tamil Association for their contribution to City of Pickering's "Adopt a Park" Initiative. Mayor David Ryan, Counsellors Dave Pickles and Peter Rodriguez were on hand to congratulate DTA's Youth.



Durham Tamil Association meets Actor Surya

Uma Suresh, DTA's Membership Co-ordinator along with her daughter Saranya met Tamil Film Star Surya at his residence on October 19, 2011. During the meeting, Surya patiently reviews numerous DTA activities. When asked about his advise to our youth, Surya said "Youth should focus on and participate in extra-curricular activities. Such Activities along with academic achievement are critical for the balanced development of our Youth. I am very proud to learn Canadian Tamil Children are so actively involved in our culture and community service. I wish you all the very best".



Uma Suresh and her daughter with Actor Surya



Business



Managing Your Money

Understanding the Registered Disability Savings Plan

David Joseph, M.A. (Economics)

The Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP), which became available to Canadians in 2008, can be a very good way to accumulate tax-deferred savings (and obtain 'free' matching grants/bonds) for a disabled person. RDSP helps parents and others save for the long term financial security of a person who is eligible for the Disability Tax Credit. Contributions to RDSPs may be supplemented by a Canada Disability Savings Grant (CDSG) and a Canada Disability Savings Bond. Here's how it works:

Any Canadian resident eligible for the Disability Tax Credit can be the beneficiary of an RDSP. There is no lower age limit – an RDSP can be established for a minor and, generally, the sooner the better. The beneficiary and/or their family and friends can invest funds in an RDSP that will grow on a tax-deferred basis. Contributions are usually not tax-deductible and can be made by anyone authorized by the holder of the plan up to a maximum lifetime contribution of \$200,000 per beneficiary. There is no limit on annual contributions, other than the lifetime limit.

Contributions must cease at the end of the year in which the beneficiary reaches age 59 and the beneficiary must begin taking payments from the plan (known as Disability Assistance Payments/DAPs) at age 60, although DAPs can be taken at an earlier age in some circumstances.

The federal government¹ will usually contribute quite generous Canada Disability Savings Grant (CDSG) and Canada Disability Savings Bond (CDSB) amounts to an RDSP. The amount contributed will be based on the family net income of the beneficiary, the value of the contributions each year, and any CDSG or CDSB contribution room carried forward from the preceding 10 years. However, when DAPs are made, all the CDSG and CDSB received by the plan in the preceding 10 years will be clawed back. The best RDSP strategy is to start saving early and leave money in the plan for at least 10 years.

Depending on the beneficiary's family income and contribution level, they may grant up to \$3 for every \$1 in contribution received by an RDSP in a year, to a maximum of \$3,500. The lifetime grant limit is \$70,000. A CDSG can be paid into an RDSP on a contribution made to the



beneficiary's RDSP by December 31 of the year the beneficiary turns 49 years old.

A Canada Disability Savings Bond (CDSB) helps low-income families save for the long term financial security of an eligible person with disability. The bond is paid into an RDSP by the Government of Canada, even if no contributions were made to the plan. A Canada Disability Savings Bond is paid by the government of Canada directly into a registered disability savings plan. Depending on the beneficiary's family income, the government may contribute up to \$1,000 each year. The life time bond limit is \$20,000. A Canada Disability Savings Bond can be paid into an RDSP until the year in which the beneficiary turns 49 years old.

Disability assistance payments (DAP) are any payments made from the plan to the beneficiary or to the beneficiary's estate. DAPs do not affect eligibility for federal income-tested benefits or credits but may affect eligibility for certain provincial or territorial benefits or cred-

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its.

If you intend to leave substantial assets to a disabled person, it is recommended that the assets in question flow into your estate, and that in your will you direct that the disabled person's share of your estate is to be set aside in a testamentary trust known as a discretionary Henson trust, such that your trustee has the discretion to decide if, when and how much to distribute to or for the disabled person's benefit. It would be useful to specify within the will that the trustee may, if he or she thinks it appropriate, use trust funds to make contributions to

an RDSP on the disabled person's behalf, but the trustee should not be required to do so.

An RDSP can be a valuable planning tool – but there are many others to consider. Talk to your professional advisor about what's best for your situation.

Disclaimer:

This report specifically written and published as a general source of information only, and is not intended as a solicitation to buy or sell specific investments, nor is it intended to provide investment advice.



News from Waterloo

WATERLOO, Ont. (Wednesday, Oct. 26, 2011) - Maclean's magazine has once again recognized the University of Waterloo as having the best reputation of any Canadian university.

Waterloo has again been recognized as the top university in the Reputation Survey of the Maclean's annual rankings of Canadian universities. Waterloo has also taken the top spot in two of the three reputation subcategories - Most Innovative and Leaders of Tomorrow - and finished third in the Highest Quality subcategory.

Waterloo has been ranked as having the best reputation of any Canadian uni-

versity of Waterloo. "It's the students, faculty and staff that create the culture of innovation, connection and excellence that has been recognized today."

The University of Waterloo maintained its overall 3rd place ranking among "comprehensive universities" in the 2011 rankings.

Maclean's has been ranking Canadian universities for 21 years, and this year's rankings issue will be on newsstands tomorrow.

About the University of Waterloo

In just half a century, the University of Waterloo, located at the heart of



Maclean's rankings confirm Waterloo's reputation as Canada's most innovative university

versity in 18 of the past 20 annual Maclean's university rankings, and this is the 20th consecutive time that Waterloo has been ranked Canada's top university for innovation.

"This is gratifying for me to see that corporate and academic leaders responding to the Maclean's survey have once again given the University of Waterloo top marks," said Feridun Hamdullahpur, President of the University of Waterloo. "A university's reputation and ability to provide innovative programs is critical to successfully attracting the best and brightest students nationally and internationally, so this is one of our measures of success. It's encouraging to see that Waterloo's students, scholarship and research are recognized by all and this makes us even more committed to continue to build on our tradition of academic excellence."

Other areas where the University of Waterloo excelled were within rankings pertaining to students, in the comprehensive universities group. Waterloo's students continued to win more national and international awards than their peers compared over the past five years and Waterloo invests more in scholarships and bursaries as a percentage of university operating budgets.

The university's faculty was also lauded given Waterloo finished at or near the top among comprehensive universities. This included placing first in attracting social science and humanities grants, and third in awards for full-time faculty and medical and science grants. Waterloo was in second place in total research dollars attracted.

"It's rewarding to see the people within the institution recognized for their contribution to the overall success of the university," said Geoff McBoyle, provost and vice-president academic at the

Canada's Technology Triangle, has become one of Canada's leading comprehensive universities with close to 30,000 full- and part-time students in undergraduate and graduate programs. Waterloo, as home to the world's largest

post-secondary co-operative education program, embraces its connections to the world and encourages enterprising partnerships in learning, research and discovery. In the next decade, the university is committed to building a better future

for Canada and the world by championing innovation and collaboration to create solutions relevant to the needs of today and tomorrow.

For more information about Waterloo, visit www.uwaterloo.ca.

GO trains coming to Kitchener Dec. 9 TRAIN COMING: Kitchener Centre MPP John Milloy announces Dec. 19 launch of GO trains service to Kitchener

By Jeff Outhit, Record staff

Long-awaited GO train service between Kitchener and Toronto begins Monday, Dec 19.

Provincial commuter trains will leave Kitchener's Via Rail station on Victoria St. N. at 5:52 a.m. and 7:10 a.m., arriving at Union Station in Toronto two hours later.

Returning trains will leave Union Station at 4:45 p.m. and 5:45 p.m. and reach Kitchener two hours later. It's Monday to Friday, no weekend service, 11 stations, 10 cars per train and one-way fare is \$14.60. A monthly pass is \$482.

Politicians hailed the \$18-million launch as a step forward after GO buses came to the region in 2009.

"It's been on the agenda for a long, long time," said Liberal government MPP John Milloy of Kitchener Centre. "We have made some great progress."

However, the new service is half the plan proposed by GO Transit in 2009. It also falls short of the service desired by Kitchener council, which plans to use two-way commuter trains to bring employees into its downtown to help

rejuvenate it.

"It's not enough," Kitchener Mayor Carl Zehr said. "But we really do understand the need to progress."

"It's a great first step. However it's not enough," said Kitchener-Waterloo MPP Elizabeth Witmer, a Conservative. People want two-way service during more hours and weekends to attend cultural and sporting events and avoid Highway 401 driving, she said.

"This is the first step to connecting the Region of Waterloo to all-day, dual direction GO service and hopefully a future high-speed rail connection between Toronto and Montreal," said Tim Mollison of the pro-transit Tri-Cities Transport Action Group.

Among the shortfalls:

- The new service cuts the trains proposed in 2009 in half from four to two. It lacks a park-and-ride station proposed near Highway 7, east of Breslau. The province will not provide a date to add trains or build the park-and-ride, saying it depends partly on ridership.

- There's no launch date for all-day, two-way service between Kitchener and

Toronto. Municipal politicians desire this to help out-of-town technology employees commute to jobs in this region. "That's a long-term goal," Milloy said.

- There's no launch date for weekend service, which the province links partly to ridership. A planned station at Acton is delayed into 2012.

- Neighbours were startled to learn that trains will park overnight in central Kitchener and idle there while warming up. The province has stalled a costlier plan to park trains west of Kitchener in Baden.

Regional government plans 120 free parking spaces for passengers at King and Victoria streets when trains launch. Another 130 spaces are planned in 2012. Anyone arriving after the second train departs will pay parking rates.

Trains will eventually relocate to a transit hub at King and Victoria streets that regional government proposes to build.

Commuter trains will travel to Toronto at an average speed of about 50 km/h due to frequent stops and track constraints.

Special Feature



Vanni Rehabilitation Organization for the Rehabilitation of the Differently Abled: VAROD VAROD's Vision with a Mission:

VAROD visualizes the empowerment of the differently abled persons of Killinochchi, Mulaithievu and Vavuniya districts, through a wide range of specially arranged and designed educational, medical and economical programs, to participate, enjoy and realize equally in cultural and social spheres without any hindrance and to achieve equal and integrated living and economical independence thereby live their full potentials.

Having the above vision VAROD has committed for the Differently abled persons through the following Programmes:

- 1) VAROD Boys' & Girls' Centers
 - a) Amalamarial Vidivelly Boys' Center
 - b) Claret Arunothayam Girls' Center

- 2) VAROD Life Rehabilitation Center
- 3) Community Based Rehabilitation Programme (CBR)

- a) In the Vavuniya, Killinochchi & Mullaittivu Districts

- 4) Sponsorship programmes

VAROD Boys' & Girls Centers

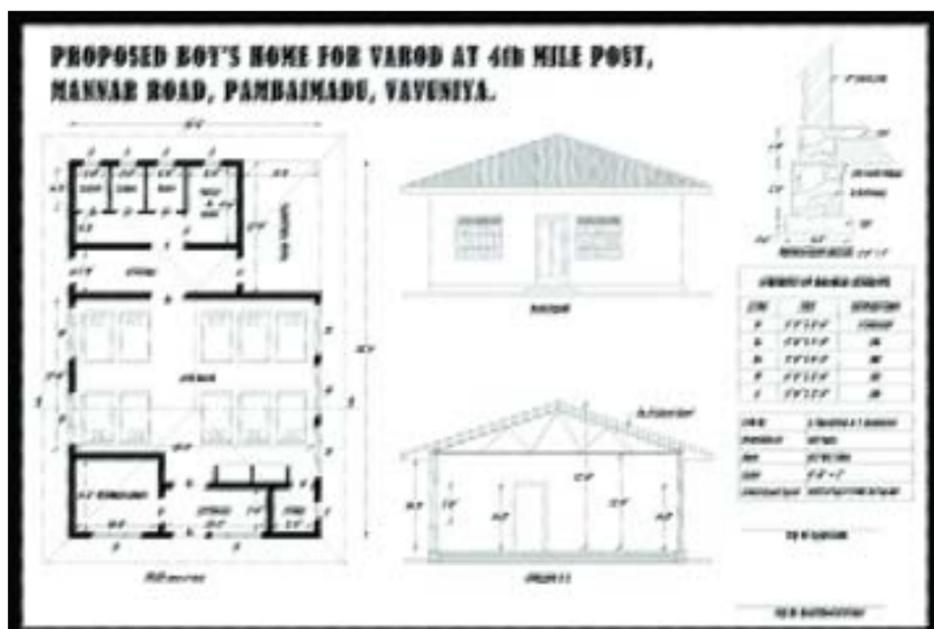
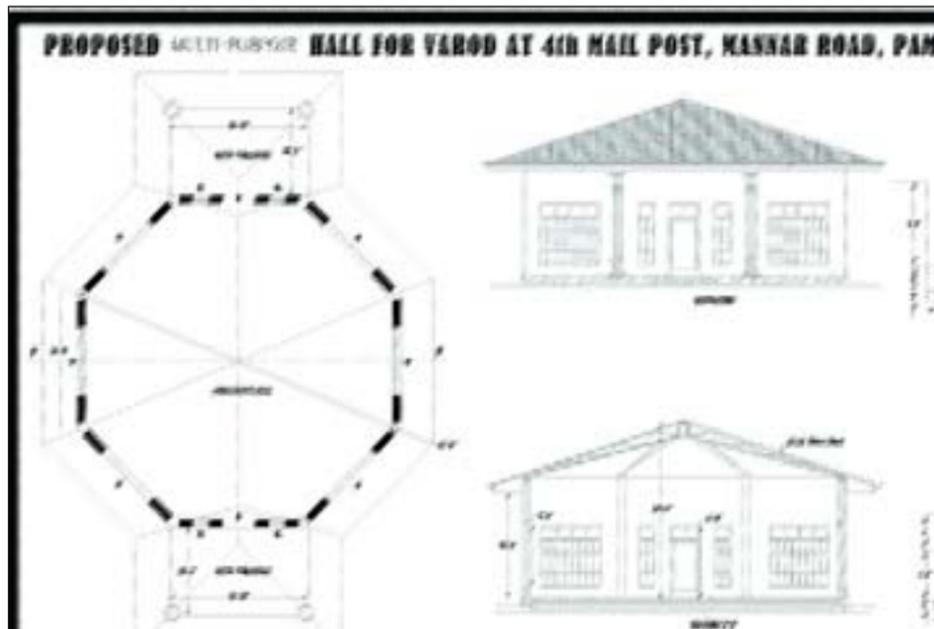
These centers were begun in the middle of 2009. It was a response to the need of the time. VAROD which bases its faith in Community based rehabilitation (CBR) programmes, had to find ways of rehabilitating the mentally challenged and physically challenged ones who had no basis for a community or who had lost their link with their family. Children, Youth and mothers who were differently abled in many ways, were sent to VAROD for possible ways of rehabilitation, by the Divisional Secretariat Office (Vavuniya) and the Courts orders. It was the begging of the VAROD boys and girls Centers.

Amalamarial Vidivelly Boys' Center:

The center is concerned in rehabilitating the mentally & physically challenged boys. So far 25 have been undergoing the rehabilitation programme in the center. At present 21 are residing. Though the need and the request to accommodate more boys into the center is more, the lack space and the facilities are challenge for it.

Claret Arunothayam Girls' Center:

The center is concerned in rehabilitating the mentally & physically challenged Girls. So far 63 have been undergoing the rehabilitation programme in the center. At present 25 are residing. There are children of the mentally chal-



lenged mothers, mentally challenged and physically challenged girls/children. The girls need special care and well structured facilities for rehabilitation. As we lack a permanent structure, and limited with space, we face some practical difficulties in providing some more facilities and responding for more requests.

The main programmes carried out in the centers:

The Two centers, VAROD Boys' Center and the VAROD Girls' Center, both have the mentally and physically challenged children and adults. They are empowered with different activities at the center.

- Basic Needs-care taking
- Food and Nutrition
- Daily habits skills
- Motor skills
- Education & Vocational training
- Education at Special School

- Physiotherapy
- Group activities
- Spiritual activities
- Cultural & important days celebrations

- Legal support
- Important & relevant documents
- Job opportunities

One of the immediate needs for these centers is that they need permanent structures with proper facilities. At present the Boys' Center is functioning in a rented house in Veppankulam, 4 Km distance from Vavuniya. The Girls' Center is with semi-permanent structure in Pamabaimadhu, near VAROD main office.

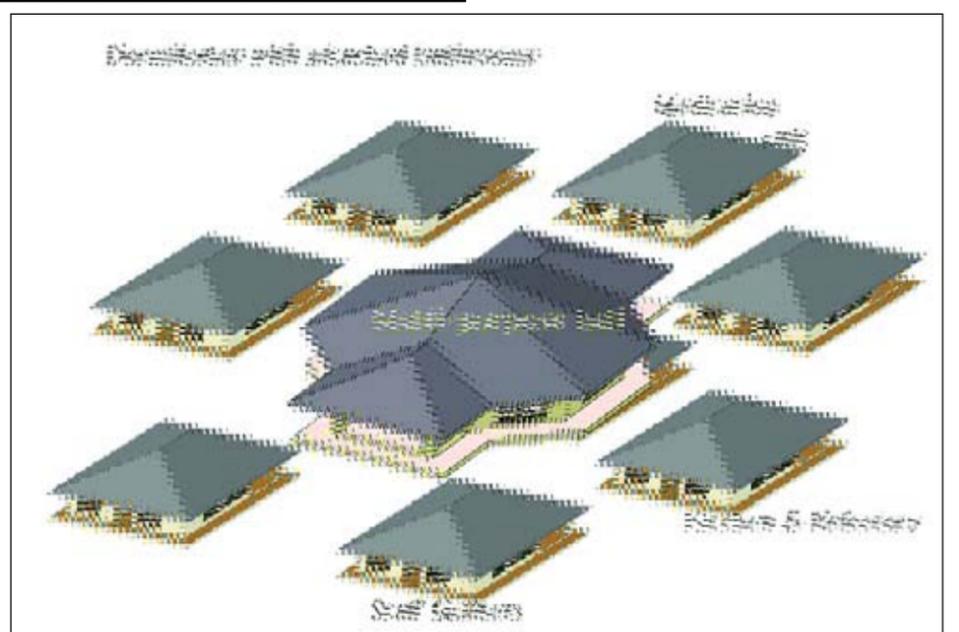
The structure is planned having a Multipurpose hall in the middle with seven small structures around the multipurpose hall. Among these seven, four of them would be serving as dormitories, one for the Office & the staff, one as Refectory & Kitchen while one structure would be used as Meditation & Therapeutic unit.

Therefore if we could collect Rs. 1'628'700.00, we can build one of the seven units of a Center.

Up to 60 Children could be accommodated in one center. The Boys Center and the Girls centre both would be build in the same structure.

To conclude, the request by the Executive Director is here...

The need for the permanent structure is one of our priorities for a better service. As there is more request and need to



- Normal school
- Vocational training
- Braille and abacus training
- Computer training for physically challenged and sight impaired
- Language classes
- Medical & psychological assistance
- Medical follow ups
- Health care

accommodate more children, the proposed permanent structure would solve it fairly.

We hope for the collaboration of the people with good heart, to enable a better future for these children with disabilities.

Rev. Fr. Albert J. Arulraja CMF
Executive Director, VAROD

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Special Feature

WSPA demands Collars Not Cruelty in the fight against rabies Global campaign launched to protect animals and communities

Every year, more than 55,000 people around the world die from rabies. Twenty million dogs are also brutally killed every year and fear of rabies is often used as the excuse. That's 38 dogs killed every minute. People think it will stop rabies. It doesn't. The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) launched the Collars Not Cruelty Campaign to ask governments worldwide to tackle rabies through the only humane and effective solution: mass vaccination of dogs. WSPA is asking Canadians to support the campaign by making a donation online at www.wspa.ca/redcollar.

"Rabies poses a serious threat to both human and animal populations in many parts of the world," said Ray Mitchell, International Campaigns Director, WSPA. "When confronted with the problem of this fast-spreading disease, national governments sometimes turn to what they believe is the only way to wipe out rabies: wipe out the dog population. However, a world without rabies does not have to mean a world without dogs."

"I think it's absolutely horrific that 20 million dogs are killed every year because of the fear of rabies when there is an alternative solution," said WSPA celebrity supporter Leona Lewis. "I really want to help WSPA spread the word worldwide and end the cruelty that is

happening at the moment. By educating people and getting vaccinations out there, we're not only helping dogs, but entire communities."

Over the past several years, WSPA has led many successful rabies control projects in Bali, Sri Lanka and several Latin American countries – all of which provided a humane and sustainable alternative to killing the dog population in response to rabies. As part of the Collars Not Cruelty campaign, the organization will work to implement similar mass vaccination projects in other areas of the world. WSPA is currently working on a new project in Bangladesh, where it is supporting the national government in implementing a large-scale vaccination campaign in the town of Cox's Bazar. The effort will save thousands of dogs in its first year alone and pave the way for a nation-wide vaccination campaign.

"We look forward to working with WSPA," said Professor Be-Nazir Ahmed, Director of Disease Control, Bangladesh Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. "We will proceed in a united way to eliminate rabies without the need to cull dogs."

WSPA strongly advocates that animal welfare agencies work in close partnership with human health, education and social welfare agencies to eradicate



rabies. It is widely accepted that the only truly effective solution for rabies control relies on a combination of dog vaccination, community education for bite prevention and accessible post-exposure treatment for bite victims. The World Health Organization (WHO) has described such vaccination campaigns as "globally, the most cost-effective strategy for preventing rabies in people."

Success in Bali: Vaccinating more than 210,000 dogs against rabies

WSPA's mass vaccination program involves teams of trained animal handlers who immunize dogs against rabies and give them a red collar. These red-collared dogs become a symbol of proactive measures being taken to protect communities from rabies - without resorting to cruelly killing dogs.

The vaccination program on the Indonesian island of Bali demonstrates the most recent success of the solution

proven by WSPA. In the first phase of the campaign, approximately 210,000 dogs (70 per cent of the total estimated population) were vaccinated. In the first six months WSPA saw dog (45 per cent) and human (48 per cent) rabies cases down by almost 50 per cent.

"Our work in Bali offered proof that a humane alternative for rabies control was both practical and effective. Other governments are beginning to recognize this success, and we are now working in several countries to design similar models for rabies control," said Ray Mitchell. "With the increasing support we are receiving from governments, international agencies and inter-governmental bodies; WSPA is confident we can create a world where we see collars – not cruelty – winning the fight against rabies."

About the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA)

The World Society for the Protection of Animals seeks to create a world where animal welfare matters and animal cruelty has ended. Active in more than 50 countries, we work directly with animals and with the people and organizations that can ensure animals are treated with respect and compassion. For more information, visit us at www.wspa.ca; follow us on Twitter or 'Like' us on Facebook.

JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS - VICTORIA'S SECRET, FOREVER 21 AND ARITZIA NOW OPEN AT SCARBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE

Toronto-Scarborough Town Centre (STC) and Oxford Properties are proud to announce that Victoria's Secret, Forever 21 and Aritzia are now all open, just in time for holiday shopping.

These new stores are in addition to recently opened ecko unltd., Zumiez and Journeys, M for Mendocino, Eyestar Optical, Justice and LOCALE. The fashion-forward brands were drawn to Scarborough Town Centre as the result of a two-year, \$62-million renovation - coupled with its fitting demographics and commitment to sustainability.

As a centre of firsts, new tenants include one of the largest two-storey Forever XXI occupying 27,000 sq. ft. Canadian store Aritzia as well as the only Victoria's Secret location in the east end of the city.

"Scarborough Town Centre has a vibrant future as a fashion destination and gathering place for brand-savvy, fashion-conscious shoppers," says Kathy Meyers, General Manager, Scarborough Town Centre. "We are both proud and delighted to offer an updated retail mix to all our visitors."

Since its renovation, retail sales at STC are up 3.71 per cent*, with monthly

foot traffic increasing by 5.2 per cent*. Monthly fashion accessory sales have risen by 20.4 per cent*, men's apparel sales have increased by 16.1 per cent* and women's apparel sales are up by 2.5 per cent*. Specialty leasing has also increased 27.2* per cent, proving retailers are gravitating towards the enhanced centre. The fresh retail mix targets STC's primary customer - fashionable 15-44 year olds who reside primarily in Scarborough, but who also live in Durham Region and Markham, as well as in Toronto's Beaches area.

Renovations to the centre include new entrances, internal and external landscaping, escalators to replace staircases at the Bay and Sears courts, eight new skylights and energy-saving daylight sensors, which ensure STC is always bathed in soft, even light. Since the revitalization, Hallmark, Footlocker, At Ease, Laura Secord, Jean Machine, Crabtree & Evelyn, Northern Reflections, Fruits and Passion, Call it Spring and Reitmans have all received upgrading or have relocated to fresher locations.

About Scarborough Town Centre: As an inviting community meeting place



with remarkable aesthetics, Scarborough Town Centre is the largest shopping centre in Toronto's east end, located at Highway 401 between Brimley Road and McCowan Road. STC currently houses 250 stores, three anchor retailers and nine restaurants on 1.4 million square feet, the Centre is the go-to fashion destination in the east end.

For more information visit www.scarboroughtowncentre.com.

Extended holiday hours begin December 1, 2011. Scarborough Town

Centre will open Monday to Saturday 9:30am to 9:30pm and Sunday from 10am to 8pm.

Christmas Eve, December 24, 8:30am to 6pm

Boxing Day, December 26, 8am to 8pm

Extended Boxing Week, December 27 - 30, 9am to 9pm

New Years Eve, December 31, 10am to 5pm.

Christmas Day (December 25) and New Years Day (January 1).

Children's Corner



SHORT STORY

By Chandrani Warnasuriya

It was a bright and sunny afternoon. The air was filled with an unusual aroma of sweetness. The barnyard animals were out basking in that sweetness, with the gentle rays of the Sun beaming on their backs. They were relaxing happy in their well earned freedom for the day. The animals however were blissfully unaware that it was soon going to be Christmas Eve, an event in which they had a great part to play, to be remembered down the ages.

The Cows freely moo... moo....ed

"Now Daisy, stop trying be stubborn and wander off," said Joshua the Inn-Keeper's son who had by now come to help his father drive the animals in and daisy had little chance to evade him. But Daisy was determined to find out.

The furtive little Billy the goat too wanted to linger on tasting it' juicy thistle. He looked up at Joshua inquiringly, "Why are we being shuffled into bed so early on such a beautiful day?," Billy too wanted to find out. He kicked and dived and tried to hide, but Joshua was too smart for Billy and sternly barred him from running off.

Trixie the Cat said, " meow...meow....

without much trouble," she thought to herself. Then she quietly went treading down the path heading towards the Inn.

The evening sky shimmered with a dazzling aura of brightness as the stars twinkled and spread a carpet of silvery light across the sky. A single bright big star hung low in the sky, spreading a golden sheen on the snow capped low hills of Bethlehem, making it an awesomely bright and beautiful night.

Daisy was soon joined by Trixie the cat. "How did you get here?" queried Daisy anxiously.

"The same way as you did." Replied

baby from the abandoned half thatched stable nearby.

"Somebody is crying out their," said Trixie, who was quick to hear the baby's cry.

M...m...m...., "And somebody is singing a lullaby," said Penny.

"Who could it be? I see a light in the rickety old stable," said Daisy.

"May be some guests found their way over to the stable to pass the night," said Penny, straining its head to look in the direction of the stable.

"The baby is crying again, may be it is cold and needs some warmth. Let's see if we could help," said Daisy moving up ahead of the others.

All the animals now hurried up along the shaggy and rugged path towards the half-broken down stable. They were joined slowly by some more animals who had likewise made their way by the half open barn gate. They quickly huddled in bending and crouching through stacks of hay into the stable. All the animals then stood astonished as they found the most beautiful baby they had ever seen.. A babe wrapped in swaddling clothes in the arms of a mom who sat lulling the baby to sleep and singing a peaceful lullaby. The bright big star suddenly appeared and stood right above the stable. The animals gazed at it with wander shifting their eyes from the star and in the direction of the baby, for momentarily it looked as if it was given to them to understand what this night was all about.

"What a beautiful baby," whispered all the animals

"Its cold out here," I'll get some fresh cut fur to keep the baby warm said Penny the lamb as he ran back to the barn to fetch some warm fur for the baby.

I'll get a pillow for the baby to rest its head," said Trixie the cat and ran over to the Inn to get a pillow.

"May be the baby will need some milk," whispered Daisy to Molly the cow.

"Oh! I can give him some of my milk," said Molly as she filled a pail full of her milk.

I shall get some fresh hay to make the baby more comfortable said Sassy as she ran back to the farm to fetch a fresh bundle of hay.

All the animals stood ready, carrying their gifts and waited patiently till the baby woke up, overjoyed that they were able to offer him their gifts.

In a little while the baby woke up; his face glowing magnificent in the light of the star above. His eyes twinkled bright, happy and amazed at the crowd of visiting animals. A light smile escaped his lips as he looked around to welcome them. Daisy was quick get near to him, to take a closer look at the wonder child. All the other animals followed suit, offering and placing their gifts by the manger.

So it was that the animals were the first to offer their warm gifts to baby Jesus as he lay in the Manger on a cold winter's night.

A STABLE STORY

and roamed listlessly as they grazed on the patches of green pasture down by the hills below, wondering why it was so extraordinarily bright this day.

The cry of Baa...baa...., from the sheep echoed down the hill sides as they wondered why the air was still so fresh and smelt of something new and wonderful.

The Rooster sang Cock-a-doodle-doo to the hens and the chickens and said, "Be on the alert! A new day is dawning to you and to me today."

The horses kept busy munching the hay stacked in the stalls and said "Neigh...neigh....! It seems we will all have a pleasant surprise today."

Sassy the little mare, kept romping round its mother and said, 'Are we going to have visitors today mom? Oh! How I wish I will have some friends soon to romp around.'

"Be quiet ," said Nancy it's mother we do not have enough hay in here for visitors to share with, unless you want to share your part of the hay."

"Oh! I will," replied the little mare, "If only the master will let me share mine with the visitors."

Just then all the animals in the barn yard were driven to a slamming halt. The owner of the barnyard happened to be an Inn-Keeper who suddenly came around hurrying and poking his stick nudging and driving all the animals and rounding them up. So the happy moo...mooing, baa...baa...crying, neigh...neighing... and cock-a-doodle...doing! was soon brought to a sudden halt.

" Now all of you, hurry and get inside, I have to send you all early to bed tonight for its going to be a busy evening for me today," he bellowed and shoved the animals inside the barn recklessly, the animals nearly stampeding and falling upon each other.

Daisy the inquisitive calf however could not easily be fenced in for he wanted to finish off his juicy green patch and hesitated and fussed, "What's going on, I don't want to go in so early on such a nice day," he dodged and jumped over the Inn-Keeper's stick.



The Many Faces of Christmas - Shaped Wooden Puzzle from Sri Lanka-Photographed at an exhibit of over 900 nativity scenes hosted by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Eugene, Oregon, USA- by Mary Harrsch

I am missing my bowl of milk tonight, perhaps I'll hide under the hay and stay close to Molly the cow and ask her for some milk," she thought.

Zella the farm dog, barked and barked and said, "Phew! I smell delicious roasted meat from the Inn's kitchen, may be I'll have a feast of spicy left overs," he thought.

So all the barn animals went quiet and waited till the Inn-Keeper left. The Inn-keeper was in a hurry to get back to the Inn, for he did not have extra hands to help him with the guests, who were pouring in to the Inn that night. So he left his son Joshua to take care of closing the barn gate once the animals had settled down.

Now, Joshua the Inn-Keeper's son however was thinking of all those friends outside who were quite jolly and playing. He wanted to get back soon to join them. It was not always that he could find so many children of his age who loved to play hopscotch, dieldle and other Jewish children's games, so Joshua hurried back as the animals seemed to have settled down.

Daisy however would not easily settle down. She was keen to find out what was going on tonight. So she quietly sneaked out and went towards the barn gate. Daisy was lucky! Joshua in all the hurry, had forgotten to close the barn gate tight. Daisy was delighted. "Now I can scoot off

Trixie, quite happy about its get away.

"Would you like to join me, I am going towards the Inn, I want to find out what's going on over at the Inn?"

"I'll be more than happy to accompany you," said Trixie, and the two animals were soon on their way treading down the path.

"Look there is an unusually bright star up in the sky, its shinning really beautiful," said Daisy who paused for a while to look up at the sky.

"I have never seen such a big star before," broke in penny the lamb who together with Sassy the mare had steadily come from behind and caught up with the two friends who were now gazing up at the sky. Daisy was even more delighted to see more of his fiends had joined him making their way out of the barn.

"We were all lucky Joshua forgot to lock the barn gate," said Penny as he joined the conversation.

"May be the night had something special to do with it to make us all wander out," said Sassy.

"You always whine and chuckle and think of something promising coming around...like extra bags of corn and fat bundles of hay, but they never come around," said Daisy trying to fool his friend.

Just then they all heard the cry of a

Silver Bells

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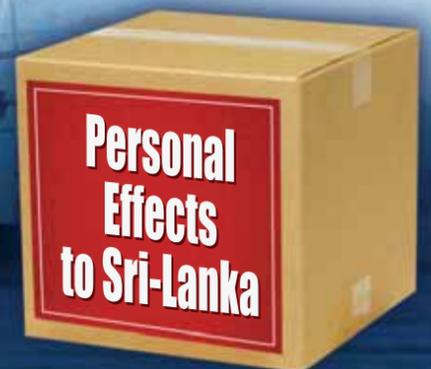
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