

A *parfait media publication*

Monsoon Journal

VOL 9 ISSUE 8 JANUARY 2015

Farmer's son Maithripala Sirisena will become Sri Lanka's new President



"People's power sweeps Rajapaksa out of Presidency"

By Siva Sivapragasam: People's power swept through Sri Lanka on Thursday like a Tsunami wave, to catapult common opposition candidate Maitripala Sirisena, a farmer's son, (like the tea-seller's son Narendra Modi in India) to become the new President of Sri Lanka.

See Pg 8 & 11 for full details and photos...

Monsoon Journal wishes everyone a Happy & Prosperous New Year & Thai Pongal



Painting by **Harini Rajadeva**
(5th grade at Applegarth Elementary School, Monroe Township, NJ, USA)

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Unprecedented amount of mobile spectrum to be released to Canadians in 2015



Harper Government announces new measures that will provide Canadians with more choice, lower prices and better service

On December 18, 2014, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Industry Minister James Moore announced new measures that will make more spectrum available to Canadians than ever before. By May 2015, the amount of spectrum available to provide mobile services to consumers will have grown by almost 60 percent since early 2014. This is the largest amount of spectrum ever released in such a short time in Canada, allowing Canadians and their families to benefit from the latest technologies and world-class services.

Canadian consumers rely on their smartphones and tablets to connect to people and information instantly. These hand-held devices depend on spectrum—an invisible infrastructure on which wireless information travels—to communicate wirelessly. Today's announcement brings Canada to the forefront of spectrum availability, ensuring Canadian consumers have access to world-class wireless networks.

To deliver on this achievement, the following new measures were announced:

The AWS-3 spectrum auction will begin on March 3, 2015, to enable the delivery of fast, reliable service on the latest smartphones, tablets and mobile devices and to encourage sustained competition.

The Government will be seeking views on making a new band of spectrum, 600 MHz, available for mobile use.

A path will be provided for mobile use in the 3500 MHz spectrum band, while maintaining existing fixed-wireless Internet services in rural areas.

A plan will be developed to enable use of the AWS-4 spectrum band so that a new competitor can offer more choice to Canadians, especially those in rural and remote areas.

An additional 2100 MHz of spectrum will be made available to support the infrastructure wireless companies

need to deliver the services that Canadians want.

A more efficient and consistent process for new licences in the 24, 28 and 38 GHz bands will be established.

Once this new spectrum is licensed, its licence holders will be subject to Canada's strict conditions of licence that make it clear that any companies which do not use this spectrum will lose it.

The Government's actions on spectrum and other telecommunications issues have had a positive effect: there is more competition today, and wireless prices have fallen on average 22 percent since 2008.

In 2006, 98 percent of mobile spectrum was concentrated in the hands of Canada's largest wireless companies. By May 2015, new competitors will have an opportunity to hold over 25 percent of total mobile wireless spectrum.

In April 2014, the Government launched Digital Canada 150, a bold vision to make Canada a leading digital nation by 2017, which includes actions to ensure robust digital infrastructure, both wired and wireless.

"Spectrum is essential to power our wireless devices, and our government is making it more available than ever before. The end result is that Canadians will benefit from more competition, lower prices and better service in our wireless sector. The Harper Government is committed to delivering competitively priced wireless services on the latest technologies."

– **James Moore,**
Minister of Industry

"Xplornet is pleased that the Minister has today affirmed his continued commitment to consumers by acknowledging that the 3500 MHz spectrum plays a fundamental role in connecting rural Canadians to all the advantages of the digital world. This decision ensures that the 3500 MHz spectrum continues to be available to provide fast and affordable Internet service to Canadians."

– **Allison Lenehan, President,**
Xplornet Communications Inc.

Canada used Lessons learned from the Tsunami Catastrophe



In Sri Lanka Canada deployed the 200 member DART (disaster assist response team) in Ampara

to Help other Developing Countries On December 24th, 2014, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, Christian Paradis issued the following statement marking the 10th Anniversary of the December 26th, 2004 Tsunami:

It has been 10 years since the Indian Ocean tsunami devastated much of the Banda Aceh coast of Indonesia and caused widespread damage and loss of life in many countries, including Sri Lanka, India and Thailand. As we mark the somber anniversary of one of the worst natural disasters the world has ever seen, our thoughts and prayers remain with the families and friends of all those who died or were injured.

In addition to the mass casualties, roughly 1.7 million people were displaced and billions of dollars in damages were incurred. From the onset it was clear that any recovery and reconstruction process would be long and arduous and that the assistance of many international partners would be needed immediately. Canada was proud to con-

tribute and to play a significant role. Individual Canadians and businesses, the provinces and territories, and the Canadian government all contributed to Canada's considerable disaster and reconstruction response.

Over the past decade, Canada has used the lessons learned from the tsunami catastrophe to help other developing countries better cope with and prepare for natural disasters. The years following the tsunami and the earthquake saw the upgrading of the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the creation of the Canadian Humanitarian Assistance Fund (CHAF) and the modernization of the Emergency Disaster Assistance Fund (EDAF). These flexible financing tools all exist to facilitate a rapid response to small, medium and large-scale humanitarian crises that affect millions of people every year.

Canada is committed to remaining at the forefront of responses to international humanitarian crises as they arise.

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Many facets of Thai Pongal: Pongal as Tamils' Passover



Upholding tradition and heritage, Tamils observe Thai Pongal with festivities on January 14/15 across the globe

Many facets of Thai Pongal:

Among other things, Thai pongal has long become a festival marking or taking gauge of prosperous sentiments in the lands of our roots, as one aspiring to be a farmer declined over a generation or two ago, the time of the year Thai Pongal falls and the traditions associated with its celebration make it an ideal time to take stock of sentiments.

One key aspect of it is that how important "Pongal Santhai" (Pongal market) became when markets in the Jaffna peninsula used to convene on alternate days etc. When the market convened for the final time before Jan 14th, the crowds and spending habits would be the gauges on how well other sectors and the general spirit of the people would be too. They all depended on a bountiful harvest. However small it may be, this aspect of our root still exists.

Celebrating own heritage amid many cultures:

Several festivals such as Hanukkah and Kwanzaa etc gained added significance in their respective diaspora communities to fulfill the calendar

of holiday time with one's own heritage. Celebrating the charming Tamil Thanksgiving Festival in January, just after the holiday season of December adds more glitter to Pongal fanfare.

Thai Pongal's significance in Home away from Home albeit in light of leading non-agrarian life styles:

In terms of Thai Pongal's "irrelevance" – that may also become a new reason to "celebrate" it. This one festival of Tamils can be said that is causing it to be not celebrated in the same way as our ancestors did, particularly its outdoor events and then also it falls in the colder months in new home away from home, wherein the most Tamil "exodus" have taken place. Yet, Tamils in the diaspora have a new-found "freedom" and acceptance to continue and celebrate their traditions.

In that sense it can become our own "Passover"; like the festival that signifies and, "Celebrates the Exodus, the freedom from slavery of the Children of Israel from ancient Egypt that followed the Ten Plagues."

Monsoon Journal joins in the celebrations, Wishing "Happy Thai Pongal" and a "Bountiful" year of health and wealth ahead.

Contributed by: By Thiru K. Thirukumaran

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“Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.” - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (August 28, 1749 - March 22, 1832), German writer and statesman

Printing the Winds of Change around us All lands home, all men kin.

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Canadian Citizenship is Valued the World Over, and with Good Reason



The Governor General was the presiding official administering the Oath of Citizenship and conferring citizenship certificates to 49 new Canadians from 34 countries during a ceremony at Rideau Hall, December 9, 2014, pic by : MCpl Vincent Carbonneau, Rideau Hall

Full Text of speech made by His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada at The Citizenship Ceremony held at Rideau Hall on December 9, 2014:

On behalf of all Canadians and in the name of Her Majesty The Queen, welcome to your citizenship ceremony.

And welcome to Rideau Hall, the home of the people of Canada!

I am so pleased to be able to participate in today's ceremony. Doing so allows me the opportunity to meet with you, soon to be Canada's newest citizens, who have come here by diverse paths from around the globe.

I would like to thank my predecessor, the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, for being here today and for her singular leadership on belonging and inclusiveness through the Institute for Canadian Citizenship—founded by her and her husband, John Ralston Saul.

This ceremony reminds me how very fortunate we are to call this country home.

As you know, Canadian citizenship is valued the world over, and with good reason. This is a society that values equality of opportunity and excellence, and that sees diversity as a virtue rather than a weakness.

In Canada, inclusiveness is a key value, which means that every Canadian citizen should have the opportunity to help shape this country for the better, regardless of background or ethnicity.

As Canadian citizens, this is your

right and, I would add, your responsibility. If we are to succeed in the ongoing national project we call Canada, and to maintain our commitment to democracy, to human rights and to justice, each one of us must do our part.

Of course, how you contribute to this country is up to you. There are so many ways to give back, and so much that needs our attention.

Through citizenship, we participate in a larger community, in which it is important to seek common ground with others even as we recognize and celebrate our differences.

Where differences exist, we find opportunities to learn and grow.

Your acceptance of citizenship is fundamental to the growth and success of Canada, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your desire and your efforts to become Canadian.

The Oath of Citizenship you are about to take represents your commitment to do your best for Canada.

As you pronounce the words of the Oath, I urge you to take them to heart and recall them daily throughout your life.

Please repeat after me:

I swear

That I will be faithful

And bear true allegiance

To Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second

Queen of Canada

Her Heirs and Successors

And that I will faithfully observe

The laws of Canada

Canada's Strong Voice in the World: Baird Reflects on 2014

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird on December 27th released the following statement reflecting on 2014 and on Canada's foreign policy:

"The end of 2014 marks the close of an unprecedented year in the fight for freedom and security around the world. We saw Russia rip up international law and use a military invasion to annex part of a sovereign nation. We saw the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant [ISIL] and all its gruesome brutality spread like a cancer through Iraq and Syria. And we saw Hamas terrorists try to instill fear in the Israeli people by deliberately targeting civilians with thousands of rockets and mortar shells through the air and with tunnels of terror underground.

"Canada has always approached global challenges from a principled position. We believe that the Kremlin's expansionism flies in the face of decades of international order and must be confronted. This is why Canada has answered Ukrainians' calls for help in maintaining their freedom and democracy and why Canada has led efforts to isolate Russia economically and politically. We believe that ISIL's actions against innocent civilians in Iraq and Syria, including members of religious and ethnic minorities, are barbaric. ISIL's expansion is a threat to international peace and security, and to Canada and Canadians. This is why Canada has joined the international coalition fighting against ISIL in Iraq, it is why we have worked to protect religious minorities and it is why we have delivered much-needed humanitarian assistance to those fleeing the violence in Iraq and Syria. And we believe that there is no moral equivalence between liberal democracies and terrorist groups, which is why we have strongly supported Is-



Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird rael's right to defend itself by itself.

"But while the world may seem more tumultuous than ever, there have been rays of hope and progress from all corners. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada is saving the lives of millions of mothers and children across the globe with the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Initiative. Canada has also led the charge at the UN and around the world in the cause of ending child, early and forced marriage and on standing with the people of Iran and North Korea. Elsewhere—from Burma to Tunisia to Afghanistan and places in between—Canada has nurtured the flame of democracy so that others may enjoy the freedoms that we in Canada are blessed with.

"Canadians can be proud of the role their country has played around the world in 2014. We have stood up strongly abroad for Canadian values and interests and the principles that make our country strong and free and the envy of the world."

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And fulfil my duties as a Canadian citizen.

Congratulations, you are now Canadian citizens!

I am so pleased to see you at Rideau Hall today and to welcome you as citizens. I encourage you to get involved in your communities and to play an active role—indeed, you likely already are!

Your contributions are essential to the smarter, more caring nation of which we dream.

Thank you for being here today, and once again, congratulations. I wish you every success in this, your country, Canada.

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Dual citizenship re-introduced in Sri Lanka

Citizens from ten countries will be eligible for dual citizenship in Sri Lanka after being interviewed by a panel.

Sri Lankans living in the UK, US, Canada, Switzerland, France, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, Norway, Sweden and Italy will be permitted to request for dual citizenship in this category.

Civil Defence and Development Additional Secretary Damayanthi Jayaratne said the system would allow Sri Lankans to obtain dual citizenship without much hassle.

Applications from those who had sought asylum in foreign countries will not be eligible to apply.

“The latest system will allow Sri Lankans to obtain dual citizenship after they are interviewed by a Cabinet-appointed panel. The government wants to encourage Sri Lankan professionals and those who want to invest here to make use of the opportunity,” Jayaratne said, adding that some of those applicants would want to send their children to school here while senior citizens would want to return to their motherland.

“Because of numerous requests

received from Sri Lankans

living abroad to settle here to launch business ventures, President Mahinda Rajapaksa and Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa have instructed that a hassle-free be implemented,” Ms. Jayaratne said.

Applications for dual citizenship would have to be recommended by Sri Lankan Ambassadors or High Commissioners serving in the aforesaid countries and they would be accepted following a strict filtering process by a committee appointed for the purpose and dual citizenship would be granted strictly on the basis of an applicant’s suitability and acceptability. A one-and-for-all fee of Rs. 200,000 would be charged from the head of a family, Rs. 50,000 for the spouse and Rs. 50,000 per child.

The granting of dual citizenship was suspended by the government two years ago. Since then the authorities continued to receive a spate of inquiries about the status of the facility. The Cabinet earlier granted approval for the amendment of the relevant laws.



North bound trains will run up to KKS Jaffna-KKS train services resumed

The Northern railway line from Jaffna to Kankesanthurai (KKS) which was suspended due to the war will be resumed from January 2nd.

President Mahinda Rajapaksa will open the Northern railway line from Jaffna to Kankesanthurai (KKS) on January 2 by inaugurating the north bound Yal Devi train up to Kankesanthurai.

Currently, the train travels from Colombo to Jaffna. It will be extended to reach the Kankesanthurai Railway Station from January 2, IRCON International Limited Project Director S.L. Gupta said.

The famous north bound Yal Devi train will leave for Kankesanthurai on January 2, linking the North and South by rail for the first time in 25 years.

Gupta said the 18 km Jaffna-Kankesanthurai railway line and the novel signaling and telecommunication system were reconstructed by IRON International LTD at a cost of US\$ 40 million under a concessionary credit line of



about US\$ 800 million provided by the Indian government for the Northern Railway Reconstruction Project.

There are three main stations in Jaffna, Chunnakam and Kankesanthurai and six other sub stations in Kukulvil, Kondavil, Inuvil, Chunnakam, Mallekalam, Tellippalai and Maviddapuram located on the segment from Jaffna to Kankesanthurai. “This segment from Jaffna to Kankesanthurai has been completed on schedule,” Gupta said. The reconstructed railway track has been designed with a speed potential of 120 kmph. Rail joints are minimised using the latest modern welding technology.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Observes Kick Off of the International Year of Soils

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6, 2015 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today begins its celebration of the International Year of Soils to highlight the importance of healthy soils for food security, ecosystem functions and resilient farms and ranches.

“Healthy soil is the foundation that ensures working farms and ranches become more productive, resilient to climate change and better prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century,” Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said during an event today at USDA headquarters. “We join the world in celebrating this living and life-giving resource.”

With an increasing global population, a shrinking agricultural land base, climate change and extreme weather events, the nations of the world are focusing their collective attention to the primary resource essential to food production—the soil. The United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), working within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership spearheaded the adoption of a resolution by the UN General Assembly designating 2015 as the International Year of Soils. The year of awareness aims to increase global understanding of the importance of soil for food security and essential ecosystem functions.

“Most people don’t realize that just beneath our feet lies a diverse, complex, life-giving ecosystem that sustains our entire existence,” said Jason Weller, chief of USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). “We are helping producers unlock the power of soil health as part of an important and very successful national campaign. Our campaign demonstrates our renewed commitment to soil conservation and soil health.”

NRCS is coordinating activities to mark USDA’s involvement in the International Year of Soils. Nearly 80 years ago, NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service, was created to improve the health and sustainability of our nation’s soils. The agency’s original mission continues to this day – providing assistance to producers looking to improve the health of the soil on their land.

Conservation that works to improve soil health is one of the best tools NRCS has to help landowners face these impending challenges – and maintain and improve their productivity with the use of soil management systems that includes cover crops, conservation tillage and no-till and crop rotations. These systems reduce sediment loss from farms and ranches, buffer the ef-

fects of drought, flood and other severe weather; sequester carbon and create biodiversity in our rural landscape.

“International Year of Soils provides an opportunity for us to learn about the critical role soil conservation and improved soil health play in the economic and environmental sustainability of agriculture,” Weller said. - usda.gov

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India still nervous about China's growing strength: *Chinese think tank*

Criticising India for not taking an "explicit stance" on China's new mega initiatives like the Silk Road and Maritime Silk Road, a state-run Chinese think tank today said India is still nervous about China's growing strength despite improving bilateral economic ties.

"Instead of taking an explicit stance on Beijing's initiatives such as the "One Belt and One Road" initiative, New Delhi only expressed interest in studying the India-China- Bangladesh-Myanmar Economic Corridor, (BCIM)," a scholar of the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies said in an article carried by the Global Times on Jan 6th.

BCIM, according to China, is part of the number of silk roads including the main silk road connecting China and Europe through central Asia and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Besides, Chinese President Xi Jinping also proposed a 21st century Maritime Silk Road for which India sought details.

China is yet to come with a final blue print of all the initiatives even

though Xi announced \$40 billion fund for it.

Several countries including Sri Lanka and the Maldives expressed support for the Maritime Silk road project.

While India has not made its stand clear, "it welcomes Washington's Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor project in exchange of US and Japan's support for its Mekong-Ganga Cooperation project", the article titled 'India still nervous about China's growing strength despite economic ties' said.

"India's different attitudes toward China in strategy and economy show its mentality over the bilateral relations: It views China as its competitor in Indo-Pacific geopolitics though it longs to take advantage of the Asian powerhouse to boost its economy", it said.

"Moreover, New Delhi is deluded in its own position, thinking that it can play a role of a strategic lever in Asia and the world at large", it said.

"There is no denying that the lack of strategic mutual trust triggered by the border dispute still constitutes the big-



gest obstacle in China-India relations. But friendly negotiations and mutual understanding are the best way to address this conundrum", it said.

"When China and India lack sufficient strategic mutual trust, forging a close personal relationship between top leaders will be conducive to the smooth

development of the bilateral ties.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's likely future China visit will help him in further understanding China. In this way, the two emerging countries will probably turn into real partners with each other," it said.

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Maithripala Sirisena will become Sri Lanka's new President

By Siva Sivapragasam

Rajapakse's electoral defeat has proved to politicians that you cannot fool all the people all the time. When he called a presidential election for January 8th, two years before he had to, Percy Mahinda Rajapaksa must have been extra confident of victory. But he did not realize that provincial elections had shown that his once unassailable popularity was waning. The pomp of power and the boast of heraldry has now thrown Mahinda Rajapakse out of the Presidency.

Sirisena has become the President at a time when the country desperately needed a regime change. Family rule, alleged corruption, authoritarianism, breakdown of the rule of law, callous disregard for the independence of the judiciary and a rising cost of living all jointly contributed to two-term President Rajapakse's downfall. "One family has captured the country's economy, wealth, administration, and the management of the political party," the new President Sirisena told reporters after crossing over. Sirisena became a symbol of simmering discontent against Rajapakse's alleged corrupt government.

In his tenure as President, Rajapak-

"Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely"
- Lord Acton

sa has tampered with the constitution of the country to suit his own political interests and hunger for power, despite already having served two terms. His decision to aggressively scrap a two-term limit for Presidents via the 18th Amendment has been criticized across the board, for ignoring democratic conventions. In an unprecedented show of strength, all opposing forces against Rajapakse joined hands together and voted with a vengeance to oust him from the presidency. Rajapakse had no idea that his one-time ally would cross-over to defeat him.

Crispy rice hoppers and spicy salad, both traditional Sri Lankan dishes were on the menu the night before when the opposition candidate Maitripala Sirisena dined with Rajapakse before he decided to cross over and contest the Presidency. It was like Judas betraying his men after the last supper.

Mistrust and deception were the reasons for the Tamil and Muslim votes to turn against Rajapakse. He kept on providing hope to the Tamil community and to India about devolution of



power. But what he proposed was not put into practice. A confused and mixed foreign policy earned him the wrath of western nations. India has also been wary about Rajapakse's close ties with neighbouring China.

The opposition is of course a motley collection of conflicting forces with somewhat different views. To what extent they can work together and see eye to eye on issues is left to be seen. One thing is certain - The future of Sri Lanka on the road to progress lies in the thinking that all parties will have to rise above sectarian interests and work together providing a fair and equal level playing field for all com-

munities. The alternative to the Rajapakse government should not result in a fragmented nation.

Rajapakse was caught under his feet due to defections and cross-overs from his party. He will obviously blame his defeat on his allies who left him and perhaps quote Julius Caesar in the Shakesperian tragedy - "Et tu Brute". ("You too Brutus").

The election was certainly a very close call and made it difficult to predict who would be the winner.

Americans have a favourite saying "It ain't all over until it's all over". This was true of the Presidential Election in Sri Lanka this time.

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Around the World

New Year in Syria offers little chance of children's education as schools remain targets of conflict



Boys play on the streets of Aleppo, capital of the north-western Aleppo Governorate, Syria. Photo: UNICEF/Romenzi

GENEVA/DAMASCUS, 6 January 2015 – Continuing conflict and the recent closure of some schools in Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zour governorates and parts of rural Aleppo in Syria is believed to have disrupted education for 670,000 children of primary and lower high school age, said UNICEF today.

“In addition to lack of school access, attacks on schools, teachers and students are further horrific reminders of the terrible price Syria’s children are paying in a crisis approaching its fifth year,” said Hanaa Singer, UNICEF representative in Syria.

“Access to education is a right that should be sustained for all children, no matter where they live or how difficult the circumstances in which they live. Schools are the only means of stability, structure and routine that the Syrian children need more than ever in times of this horrific conflict.”

While there remain conflicting re-

ports on the exact scale of the current school closures, between January and December 2014 alone there were at least 68 attacks on schools across Syria, according to data available to UNICEF. These attacks reportedly killed and wounded hundreds of children. The real numbers are expected to be higher, and there are indications that some attacks may have been deliberate.

“Schools should be respected as zones of peace and safe havens for children where they can learn without fear of death or injury,” said Ms. Singer.

“UNICEF has repeatedly called upon all parties to the conflict to uphold their responsibility to protect children, schools, and other civilian infrastructure from the conflict - a call we repeat with even greater urgency as a new year begins with children in Syria still facing the most terrible threats to their safety, wellbeing and their education.”

- via unicef.org

GDP growth in India to be much better in 2015-16

India’s economic growth is expected to pick up in the current fiscal and will be “much better” in 2015-16, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said on December 29th.

“The last two years witnessed an economic slowdown. This year may be somewhat better, and next year will be much better,” he said here.

Indian economy was growing at over 9% for three years before it was impacted by the global financial crisis of 2008. The growth rate fell to sub-5% in the last two consecutive fiscals -- 2012-13 and 2013-14.

In the first half of the current fiscal, it improved to 5.5%, up from 4.9% recorded in 2013-14 fiscal. The government has projected the GDP growth to be 5.5% in 2014-15, up from 4.7% re-



corded last year.

Minister of Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitharaman said India is among the few countries for which IMF has upgraded its growth outlook. IMF in October has projected India’s GDP expansion at 5.6% in 2014-15.

The mid-year economic review of the government has projected that the economy has potential to grow at a much faster pace, she added.

- PTI



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K BALACHANDER

Trendsetter and Giant Among Film-Makers

1930 – 2014



K Balachander with actors Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth. (Press Trust of India photo)

Acclaimed filmmaker K Balachander, who died at the age of 84 on Dec.23rd, had brought in a new wave of filmmaking in Tamil cinema with bold themes and mentored talented actors like Kamal Haasan, Rajinikanth and Sridevi.

The Dadasaheb Phalke award winner had carved out a niche for himself on the national stage with memorable films like 'Arangetram', 'Aval Oru Thodarkadhai', Rajini and Haasan-starrer 'Apoorva Raagangal', 'Avargal', 'Ek Duje Ke Liye' and 'Aaina'.

Popularly known as KB, Kailasam Balachander broke away from the staple Tamil films in the early '70s by championing bold themes and the cause of women and the downtrodden in his films.

As a trendsetter, he often courted controversies. One of the early ones involved the portrayal of a Brahmin girl as a prostitute, which shook the community to which he belonged.

Hailed as "Iyakunar Sigaram" (a giant among directors), Balachander stood out for experimenting with new faces like Saritha, Sujatha, Mohan, Prakash Raj, comedian Vivek and character artiste Nazar. A tough taskmaster, he brought out the best from his actors.

Balachander made his debut in cinema with Tamil film 'Neerkumizhi', based on his play, in 1965. Late comedian Nagesh had played the poignant role of a cancer patient in the film.



KBalachander

His 'Sindhu Bhairavi' was a brilliant portrayal of a yearning for intellectual companionship by the protagonist and the intricate relationship problems that came of it.

Born on July 9, 1930, at Nannilam in then composite Thanjavur district, Balachander directed films in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi. He wrote, directed and produced more than 100 films in his long career, launching more than 65 actors, actresses and technicians in the Tamil film industry.

His blockbuster movies include 'Aval Oru Thodarkadhai' (Tamil), which was remade as 'Anthulaney Katha' in Telugu, 'Maro Charitra' (Telugu) remade as 'Ek Dhuj Ke Liye' in Hindi, and 'Thillu

Mullu' (remake of Golmaal in Hindi).

Several accolades came his way in his glittering career - including the Dadasaheb Phalke award (2010), Padma Shri (1987), Kalaimamani Award (Tamil Nadu) Nandi and Golden Nandi (Andhra Pradesh) besides nine National film awards and Filmfare trophies.

"My father touched so many hearts and lives though his films. He inspired the common man. His death is a terrible loss not only to our family but the entire film industry," said Pushpa Kandasamy, daughter of the filmmaker.

Balachander is survived by his wife, son and daughter. His other son, Kailasam died on August 15 this year.

Beginning his life as a teacher, he became a superintendent in the Accountant General's office, and entered Tamil filmdom by writing dialogue for MGR's movie 'Dheiva Thaa'.

Even while working in the AG's office, he staged several dramas. His successful play 'Server Sundaram' was later made into a Tamil film in 1964, which was directed by Krishnan Panju and produced by AVM.

When satellite television came to occupy a sizable entertainment space among audience in early 1990s, he was quick to recognise its importance. He produced several television mega serials including 'Rail Sneham' and 'Kai Alavu Manasu'. Recently, he acted in 'Rettaisuzhi' which was produced by film director Shankar.

Modern Language Association prize goes to author of book on 'Global Englishes'



Prof. Suresh Canagarajah

Suresh Canagarajah, the Edwin Erle Sparks Professor in Applied Linguistics, English and Asian Studies at Penn State, will receive the 33rd Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize from the Modern Language Association for his book "Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations," published by Routledge. The prize is awarded for an outstanding work on language, culture, literature, or literacy with strong application to the teaching of English.

The prize is one of 16 awards that will be presented in early January 2015, during the association's annual convention, to be held in Vancouver. The committee's citation for the winning book said "This lucid and cogent work resists the presentist pull to declare as unprecedented the global, digitalized, and hybridized languages of our historical moment. Acknowledging the risks and complications that accompany the call

to reenvision English as a translingual practice, Suresh Canagarajah argues powerfully that we cannot afford to ignore or condemn the linguistic resources our students bring to us as we seek more ethical classrooms in a more cosmopolitan world."

He is the author of eight books, including "Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching," which received the 1999 Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize and was shortlisted for the British Association for Applied Linguistics Book Prize, and "A Geopolitics of Academic Writing," awarded the Olson Award by the Association of Teachers of Advanced Composition. He has served as the editor of TESOL Quarterly and has edited or co-edited special issues of the Journal of Language, Identity, and Education and the Reading Matrix.

His articles have appeared in numerous publications, including the Journal

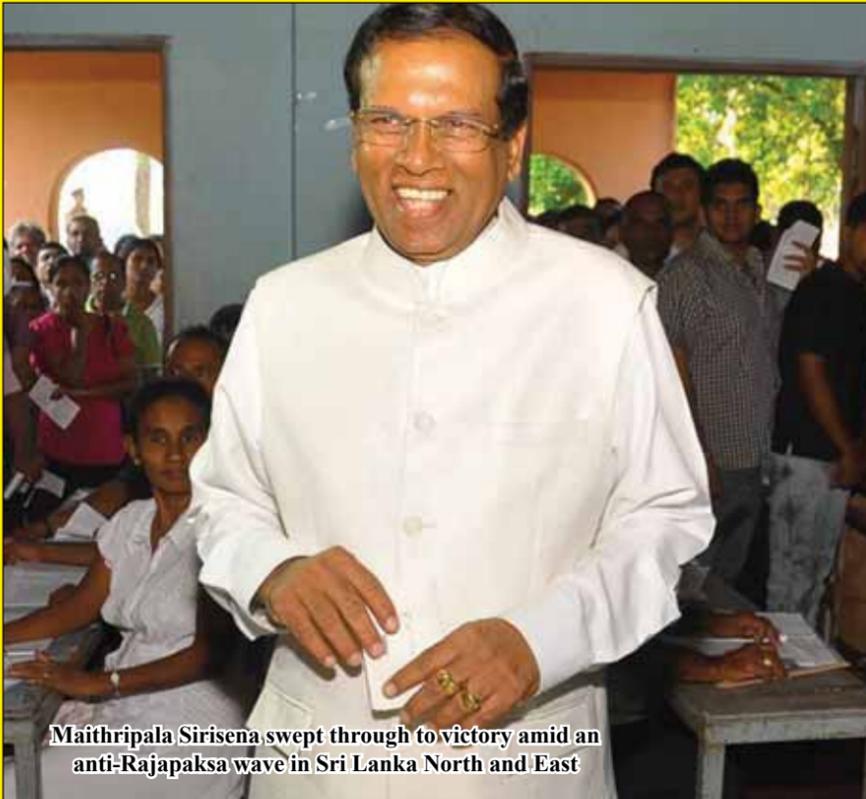
of Second Language Writing and the Annual Review of Applied Linguistics; for his article in "College Composition and Communication," he received the Braddock Award for the best article in the journal in 2007.

Canagarajah received a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Kelaniya, in Sri Lanka; a master of arts degree from Bowling Green State University; and a doctorate from the University of Texas, Austin. He is a member of the faculty in the College of the Liberal Arts at Penn State.

The Modern Language Association of America and its 30,000 members in 100 countries work to strengthen the study and teaching of languages and literature. Founded in 1883, the MLA provides opportunities for its members to share their scholarly findings and teaching experiences with colleagues and to discuss trends in the academy.



Maithripala Sirisena will become Sri Lanka's new President



Maithripala Sirisena swept through to victory amid an anti-Rajapaksa wave in Sri Lanka North and East



Maithripala Sirisena swept through to victory amid an anti-Rajapaksa wave in Sri Lanka North and East



Praying for victory!



President Mahinda Rajapaksa casting his vote



Voters line-up to vote



Maithripala Sirisena swept through to victory amid an anti-Rajapaksa wave in Sri Lanka North and East



Police guarding President's House at Temple Trees, Colombo

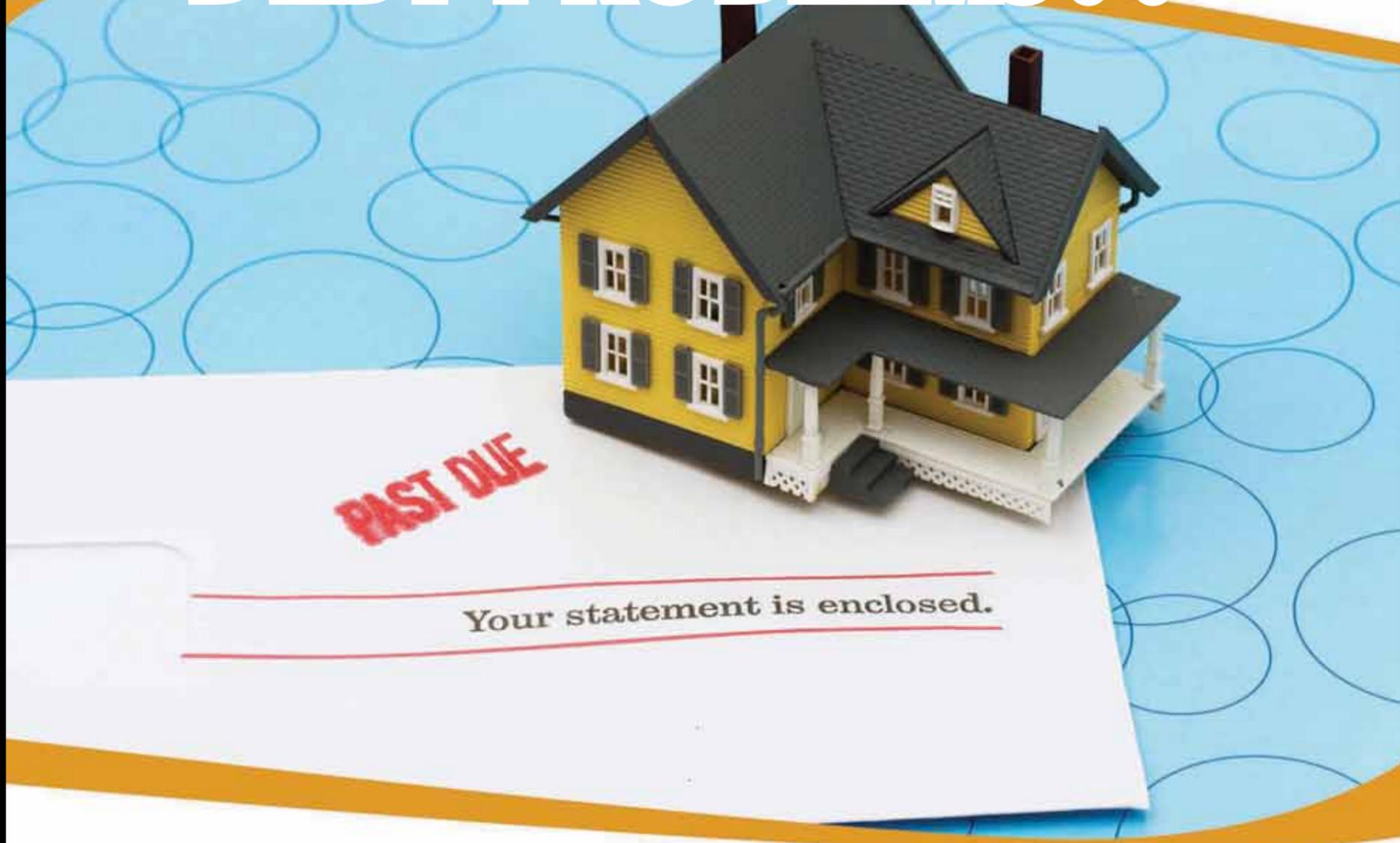


Tamil National Alliance Leader R. Sampanthan (centre) gestures at the news conference in Colombo announcing the support for Maithripala Sirisena, flanked by MPs M.A. Sumanthiran (left) and Mavai Senathiraja - Pic by Kithsiri De Mel-courtesy: DailyFT



Election Commissioner Mahinda Desapriya addressing the Media

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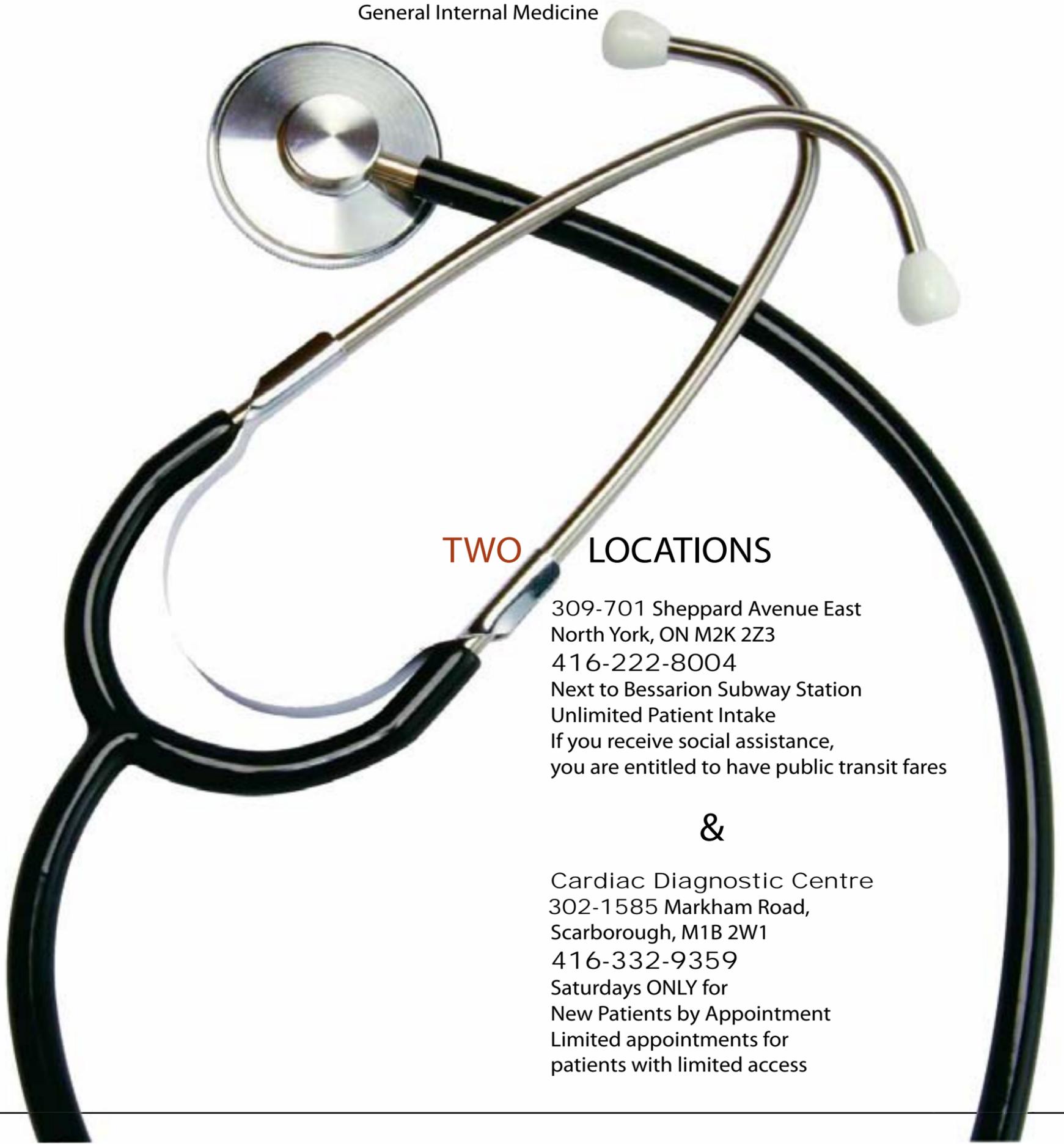
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Sun Exposure: How to Protect Your Skin



By: Jeavana Sritharan,
BHSc, MHSc,
PhD Student

Remember the summer days when you could sit for long periods of time outdoors with the warm sun beaming down on you? Now that we are in the middle of winter, we want nothing more than to get that feeling back and to have as much sun exposure as possible.

Some of us will escape down South to get just that but most of us will hope for those sunny winter days. Short pe-

a problem was because young individuals were using tanning beds more frequently and exposure to UV rays at younger ages significantly ages the skin and increases the risk of severe skin cancer later in life.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer around the world because of the direct sun exposure based on the climate and location of Australia and because Australia's population is mainly Caucasian. With increased sun exposure in young populations in Australia, there is a significant increase in skin cancer rates later in life as these individuals age.

Three main types of skin cancer:

Basal Cell Carcinoma – this can appear as a small bump or flat disco-

size of the lesion (usually bigger than 6mm)

E – Evolving, any new lesions or moles that change in size, colour, or shape

Who is at risk?

Individuals who have fair skin, have more prominent freckles, or tend to burn easily are at higher risk. Also, individuals who have moles or have a history of severe sunburns are at a higher risk. Among the South Asian community, skin tones vary significantly which is a clear indication that risk also varies depending on skin tone, skin sensitivity, and sun exposure.

Protective measures

The skin can be protected and as the skin is an important organ for the body,

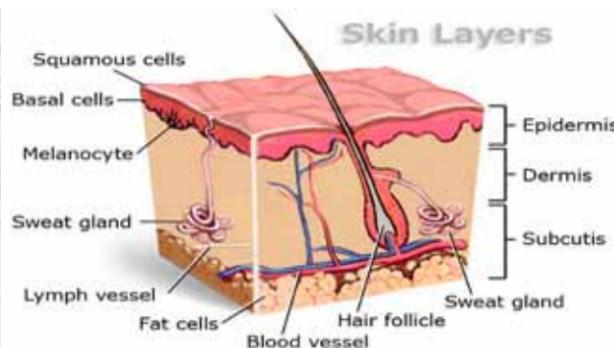
Asia after many years of constant sun exposure. Over time many of these individuals develop cataracts in Canada because wearing sunglasses is not common practice for many. So as a tip, make sure that you and your family wear sunglasses when out in the sun.

Sun exposure in the winter months

You can still be exposed to UV rays during the winter months as UV rays can be reflected by the snow. This is more damaging when individuals are at higher altitudes and this is especially important for winter sports like skiing and snowboarding.

Sun exposure when swimming

A common misconception is that spending time in the water will mean



riods of sun exposure can be healthy for our skin and overall health, but there are many things to be aware of regarding sun exposure. The South Asian community, in particular, may think they are protected from any sun related health concerns; however this is not the case.

In the South Asian community there is the perception that with deeper pigmentation and darker skin there is effective protection from the ultraviolet radiation (UV rays) which the sun emits. Yes, darker pigmentation means the skin is more protected but that does not mean that the skin cannot be harmed at all.

Having high sun exposure for long periods of time will lead to more wrinkles and age spots making the skin look many years older than it is. This increases the effects of aging and increases your risk for skin cancer. Over time, the sun's UV rays can damage skin fibers known as elastin, which results in the skin beginning to sag, stretch, and be more prone to tearing.

This is a huge concern in many western nations that have high rates of skin cancer like in the United States and Australia. We know that UV rays are the number one cause of skin cancer in many Western nations and the increase caught much media attention when tanning beds became quite popular. The reason tanning beds became

loured lesion on the skin, generally in the areas of the face, neck, legs, or arms. This is a less serious type of skin cancer and accounts for up to 95% of all skin cancers along with squamous cell carcinoma. It is highly treatable if found early.

Squamous Cell Carcinoma – a firm red nodule or rough lesion that may bleed easily and can appear in areas that are constantly exposed to the sun. This is a less serious type of skin cancer and accounts for up to 95% of all skin cancers along with basal cell carcinoma. It is highly treatable if found early.

Melanoma – presents as a pigmented patch of white or red and tends to look irregular but in the form of a mole. This is a severe skin cancer that accounts for a majority of skin cancer deaths and can spread to other organs if not treated. There are signs used to assess melanoma lesions that can be useful for self-examination.

Signs for melanoma

A – Asymmetry, the lesion will appear asymmetrical meaning that one half may look different from the other half

B – Border, edges are rough, blurred, or ragged

C – Colour, uneven discolouration ranging from brown, black, red, blue, white, or tan

D – Diameter, major changes in the

continuous protection is needed. With ongoing and consistent sun protection, the skin is more likely to repair itself when it is damaged so protecting yourself throughout your lifetime will actually help maintain healthier skin. As we age, the skin will definitely change but we can slow down the process.

1. Apply sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more, with UVB and UVA protection and use about 20 minutes before heading outdoors and make sure to re-apply if spending more than 2 hours outside and even more if you are swimming or sweating

2. Use UV protected cosmetics, contact lenses, and clothing

3. Wear sunglasses and hats to help protect your eyes and face

4. Avoid direct sun exposure during peak hours – usually from 10am to 2pm

5. Check your skin when you are exposed over time or excessively to ensure no new moles or lesions are present

Why are sunglasses important?

Your skin is not the only part of the body at risk and people often forget how the sun can affect the eyes. With sun exposure over time, the risk of cataracts will increase with age. The number of cataracts in older adults across the globe is on the rise. People often forget to protect their eyes which can be a serious concern with high sun exposure. For example, many individuals migrated to Canada from South

less exposure to the sun's UV rays. However, it is quite the opposite as spending time in the water without sun protection can be seriously harmful to the skin. The water reflects UV rays from the sun to our skin quite effectively and this can be more severe on extremely hot days and especially during peak hours from 10am to 2pm. You will not actually feel the burning until after you leave the water. Protective measures include swimming earlier in the day or in the late afternoon to avoid peak hours and by wearing sunscreen that is water resistant and making sure to re-apply every few hours.

Being knowledgeable about sun exposure will help not only you, but the community as a whole. This is not to say that all or any sun exposure is harmful as we know that some sun exposure is advantageous. But being cautious and protecting your skin will help to allow adequate sun exposure without severe skin consequences.

Jeavana Sritharan is a PhD Student in Medical Science at the University of Toronto. She is currently working with Cancer Care Ontario with the Occupational Cancer Research Centre and is the Co-Founder of the webpage, Health Perspectives.

Contact email:

info@healthperspectives.ca



SCARBOROUGH SURGEON CROSSES BORDERS TO HELP PATIENTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Plastic Surgeon Dr. Timothy Sproule, who works out of The Scarborough Hospital (TSH), has a passion for not only improving the lives of patients in his own backyard, but also patients in the developing world. Recently, Dr. Sproule travelled to Nepal – where he has visited on numerous occasions – for eight

has now changed because so many of the places I've gone to do cleft lip surgery better now, better than we do here in North America really, and so they don't really need help with that anymore. Instead, they need help with some of the more complex surgeries that have become more routine here, but that they don't do at all there; in particular, microsurgery and burn surgery."

"I was asked by my friend, Dr. Shankar Man Rai, Nepal's most senior Plastic Surgeon, to present at this unique conference. They don't have a lot of international conferences in Nepal and it was great to have a conference to share ideas with international partners on how best to carry out these reconstructive procedures."

Dr. Rai and his team, with the assistance of Dr. Sproule, are developing a specialized burn unit program in the country's capital city of Kathmandu to treat the seemingly never-ending onslaught of burn victims.

"Burns are under-treated and abundant in the developing world," says Dr. Sproule. "Here, burns are looked after pretty well.

We will take someone with extensive burns right into the operating theatre to perform the reconstruction, right at the beginning of their injury. In the developing world, many people sit in their bandages or their burns rot off and it's extremely painful. In addition, there is a high instance of burns there; more so than here. People in the developing world mostly

use fire for cooking and heating, they have antiquated electrical systems, and they often deal with terrorist and domestic attacks. Burns can be a matter of life or death in places like Nepal."

According to Dr. Sproule, although doctors in countries like Nepal are incredibly skilled at many types of reconstructive surgeries, they need more training in proper burn reconstruction procedures, and they need the sophisticated equipment to expertly conduct these types of surgeries.

Not only has Dr. Sproule shared his expertise about burn reconstruction to doctors in the new burn unit in Kathmandu, but on his recent trip, he donated a specialized piece of equipment to improve the level of care doctors can provide to their patients.

"Through my foundation, I have donated a specialized piece of equipment called a Dermatome. The Dermatome has a special blade that allows you to take off an absolute razor thin piece of skin, really precisely, so the site where it's removed heals without scarring and the skin itself can be used for reconstruction. You can do this type of thing with more primitive types of instruments, but this is so much better. It really can help transform the work doctors in the developing world can do."

Although Dr. Sproule wasn't able to perform any burn reconstructive surgeries while in Nepal this trip, he was able to perform and assist with surgeries in the Kathmandu clinic and in a clinic in the neighbouring ancient city of Kirtipur.

Helping patients in the developing world who can't afford or don't have access to the services we have here in Canada, gives Dr. Sproule a great satisfaction, and giving back somehow is something he says everyone should do at least once.

Through his charity, Dr. Sproule has gone on more than 30 trips to countries around the world including Guyana, Bangladesh and Bolivia. He says each trip really puts his problems into perspective.

"Every time I come back from a trip like my recent one in Nepal, I feel much better about the work I do," he says. "I feel centred; and I highly encourage people to work overseas in any capacity. At The Scarborough Hospital, there are a lot of doctors and nurses that do great work – here and overseas. It's why we got into health care; we want to help others. It's a great feeling to give back and help out."



days to impart his expertise in microsurgery and burn reconstruction as a co-chair at the Resurge International South Asian Plastic Surgery Conference. "My interest in helping people in the developing world began in the early days of starting my practice," says Dr. Sproule. "I started helping out by repairing cleft lips, but over the past couple of years, my focus

New services offer more choice for expectant parents at TSH

Throughout her pregnancy, Diana Jallim's plan was always to have a water birth. However, she never expected that she would be the very first planned water birth for The Scarborough Hospital (TSH).

"It feels really special," said Diana, as she looks at little Savannah in her bassinette, who arrived just after 1 p.m. on December 9 at TSH's Birchmount campus.

"My mom's famous now," adds Diana's other child, 11-year-old Deonte, with a smile.

TSH recently began offering water births at its Birchmount campus and will soon be offering them at the General campus.

For Tama Cross and Tenisha Hibbert, the two midwives from the organization Diversity Midwives who delivered Diana's baby, this is great news.

"It's very exciting. Water births are a very positive choice for women that can decrease interventions and increase their enjoyment of the actual experience," said Tama.

"Diversity Midwives has been providing care for women at TSH for over 12 years and were instrumental in introducing water births to TSH."

Tenisha adds that the fact TSH is offering water births is also important "because there are only a few hospitals across the Greater Toronto Area where they are available, so this gives women with low risk pregnancies more choice to have them either in hospital or at home."

In addition to the introduction of water births, TSH has welcomed Sages-Femmes Midwives as a second group of midwives.

"Our hospital realizes the importance of respecting the diversity of our patient population by assisting our expectant mothers in giving birth their way, according to their preferences, customs and beliefs," said Dr. Nathan Roth, Co-Medical Director, Maternal Newborn and Child Care program at TSH.

"The Birchmount campus Family Maternity Centre has been at the forefront of the development of this collaborative care model for TSH, which allows for interprofessional excellence between our midwives, physicians, nurses and support staff."

"We are proud to be able to add Sages-Femmes Midwives to the already outstanding team in The Scarborough Hospital's Maternal Newborn and Child Care (MNCC) program," said Dr. Georgina Wilcock, Co-Medical Director, Maternal Newborn and Child Care program at TSH.

"Sages-Femmes is equally focused on providing safe, evidence-based, high quality care to mothers and babies."

TSH is also recruiting more obstetricians so families can continue to receive high quality care close to home. All of these initiatives – the

introduction of water births, the addition of Sages-Femmes Midwives and the recruitment of more obstetricians – add to the wide variety of programs already available to expectant parents at TSH. These include pre-natal tours and classes, an early pregnancy assessment clinic, a breastfeeding clinic, and an umbilical cord partnership with Inception Lifebank Cord Blood Program.

"It's always an honour to be a part of the experience as a family brings new life into our vibrant community," said Barb Scott, Patient Care Director of the MNCC program at TSH.

"Our team is dedicated to helping expectant parents prepare, deliver and adjust during this exciting time in their lives."

For more information on the MNCC program, visit the TSH website. <http://www.tsh.to>



“We are the Patient Experience”: TSH is looking to partner with patients and family members



The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) is inviting previous patients and/or family members to work with us on two important initiatives that will further enhance the patient experience.

1) Visiting Hours – TSH is reviewing its current visiting hours policy to better accommodate the time families can spend with their loved ones in the hospital. We want to limit any barriers to families being with their loved ones, while at the same time keeping our patients on the road to recovery.

2) Care Plans – Our goal is to work with patients and families to develop common care plans that are developed WITH our patients and their families. Being involved in creating their care plan ensures patients understand the plan, have a say in how it's formed, and have an opportunity to include their personal health care goals. We want plans of care to be easily understood and something patients can have with them during their stay.

We are looking for three to four patients and/or family members for each initiative. You will be paired with three to four staff members and work together to help shape these initiatives. A facilitator will also be available to guide the process.

TSH recognizes the value that patients and family members can bring to the health care team. Their unique perspective is essential in helping the hospital build models of care that are truly person-focused and meaningful to our diverse community. By working together and learning from each other, we can ensure better outcomes for our patients and their families. We cannot do this without you!

Please contact Rhonda Seidman-Carlson, Vice-President, Interprofessional Practice and Chief Nursing Executive, to volunteer your time or learn more about the role.

rseidman-carlson@tsh.to
416-438-2911 ext. 6086

The Scarborough Hospital welcomes its first babies of 2015!

Salman Sayany and Zeenat Malam received a very special gift for their 7th wedding anniversary – their first child, baby girl Sayany. The beautiful little bundle of joy weighing in at 5lbs, 11 ounces, arrived safe and sound at 1:05 a.m. on January 1 at The Scarborough Hospital's (TSH) General campus.

“At 1:05 a.m. there was a last push and our

beautiful daughter was born,” says Salman, a very new and very proud father. “My wife is a superstar. It was the happiest New Year.”

Salman hopes his brand new baby girl is the first of many.

“As soon as we get the handle on one we hope to have many more,” he says, and adds that, “we

would definitely come back to this hospital – the staff is amazing here and the midwives were just excellent.”

Another set of proud parents also welcomed their child on January 1 at TSH's Birchmount campus. Father Qing Qiang Jin and mother Yan Ju Nian said hello to their baby girl, Zi Yan Jin, at 6:32 a.m.

“We had planned for a natural birth, but the baby was so excited and decided to come early, so a C-Section it was,” says Qing Qiang. “It's so exciting to see our daughter for the first time. We're proud and excited, and mom and baby are doing very well.”

Qing Qiang adds that he and his wife are appreciative of the excellent care they received and would certainly return to TSH if they have more children.

“We just want to say thank you,” he says. “Everyone was so nice and professional. It was perfect.”

These new families, like thousands of other expectant parents each year, have benefitted from the wide variety of services available in TSH's Maternal Newborn and Child Care (MNCC) program. These include pre-natal tours and classes, an early pregnancy assessment clinic, a breastfeeding clinic, and an umbilical cord partnership with Inception Lifebank Cord Blood Program.

TSH has made a number of important improvements in the MNCC program that allow families to continue to receive high quality care close to home. The changes include the recruitment of more obstetricians and the offer of water births at the Birchmount campus. Diversity Midwives, who have been providing care to women at TSH for more than 12 years, were instrumental in helping to introduce water births. As well, the hospital recently welcomed a second group of midwives; Sages-Femmes Midwives joins Diversity Midwives, doubling our midwifery services.

For more information on the MNCC program, visit the TSH website. <http://www.tsh.to>



Women receive fastest cancer treatment in province, in central east regional program



The best at what we do.

The fastest cancer care for women with an abnormal breast screening test result occurs right here in the central east region, which includes Durham and Scarborough.

Rouge Valley Health System is part of the Central East Regional Cancer Program, which has just received recognition from Cancer Care Ontario for achieving the lowest wait times in the province. The central east program is one of many in the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP), funded by Cancer Care Ontario. The OBSP provides high-quality breast cancer screening for women aged 50 to 74 years.

“The process to get assessed used to take a couple of months. Now, it can take as little as a week,” says Michelle Jones, a system navigator with the OBSP clinic at Rouge Valley. Her job is to support patients through the whole process, from initial family doctor referral to diagnostic assessment, surgical consult, biopsy, the patient receiving the pathology report and getting booked for surgery if needed.

“Before the whole assessment program, a woman would visit her family doctor with a concern. The family doctor would put in a request for a mammogram or ultrasound. Once that screening was done, the results would go back to the family doctor. Most mammograms are normal. The few abnormal mammograms are referred to a surgeon, who then performs the biopsy.” By calling the program at Rouge Valley (Centenary and Ajax-Pickering hospital campuses), family doctors can get women in for a screening almost immediately, sometimes the same day.

If the findings of the screening are suspicious, the results come to Jones, who phones the family doctor. From the time Jones gets the report to the time the patient sees a surgeon is less than 72 hours. After a biopsy is done, Jones aims to get the pathology reports back to the referring surgeon and family doctor quickly, again within 72 hours.

“The most stressful time for a woman going through this is the time between getting an abnormal result and the final pathology report,” explains Jones. “So I navigate the system for these patients. If the results don’t come in on the expected timeframe, I find out why.”

A patient’s experience

As part of patient Lynn Bannan’s regular mammograms, an abnormal-

ity was found. “They fast-tracked me through,” she says. “On a Monday I had the mammogram and ultrasound, three days later I had a ductography (x-ray of breast ducts), and within two hours after that I was in my doctor’s office for a report.”

Bannan is grateful for the program staff at Rouge Valley. “When you sit there before your mammogram, you can see the stress on every woman’s face in that waiting room,” she says. “But here at Rouge, they make you feel at ease. They go above and beyond. They want to get you that diagnosis and put people’s minds at ease. Their attitude is, if there’s a road to go down, let’s get them on it, as soon as possible,” she says.

She adds, “The team here plays a big part in helping to deal with the fear. They are so compassionate to your nerves and feelings.”

Jones says: “We are so pleased to be meeting the wait time targets for getting women their diagnosis. We aim to get women this information, and their treatment, as soon as possible. In some cases, women get their surgery within one to three weeks.”

Women with a concern can request a referral to the OBSP at Rouge Valley Health System through their family doctor, who can call OBSP booking at 416-281-7299. Doctors seeking urgent assistance can call Michelle Jones at 416-284-8131 ext. 5329.

Women over 50, who would like a regular mammography screening, do not need a doctor’s referral and can directly call OBSP booking at 416-281-7299.

Cancer care at Rouge Valley

In addition to the recognition of the Central East Regional Cancer Program, Rouge Valley specifically has achieved several other targets in cancer care in the 2013-2014 fiscal year. Rouge Valley has been awarded recognition by Cancer Care Ontario for:

- Achieving the highest rate for pathology post-surgical report turnaround time in the province, with 100 per cent of reports received within 14 days (for colorectal cancer);
- Meeting the provincial 2013-2014 annual improvement target for pathology post-surgical report turnaround time for colorectal cancer; and
- Meeting the provincial 2013-2014 improvement target for reducing wait times for treating surgical oncology patients within all priority categories.

New video prepares kids for surgery Rouge Valley offers virtual look inside the surgical experience



Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) is helping young patients to be more comfortable when they come for surgery.

A new video, Anna’s Surgery, shows paediatric patients what they can expect as they prepare for their surgery at the Rouge Valley Centenary hospital campus. Sue Fyfe, program director, women’s & children’s program, diabetes education and chaplaincy at RVHS, says, “Many people do not see the inside of an operating room until they have surgery, and it can be a scary experience — especially for children — with all of the equipment that is in an operating room. The main benefit of the video is to help reduce anxiety by familiarizing patients and families with the environment and routine of the surgical experience.”

The six-minute video was introduced in the hospital at the end of November and is getting positive reviews from parents. Ava Clarke, paediatric gastroenterology registered nurse in the Galaxy 12 child and teen clinics at RVC, has met with several families to prepare children for surgery. “We show the video in our pre-surgical meeting, and it answers the parents’ questions,” Clarke says. “And, it’s great for children to see Anna in the video going through the whole process, and come out smiling.”

The video is available on Rouge Valley’s YouTube Channel. Watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZxfah0MeU>. A new video for the paediatric department Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering hospital campus will be done later this year.



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

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

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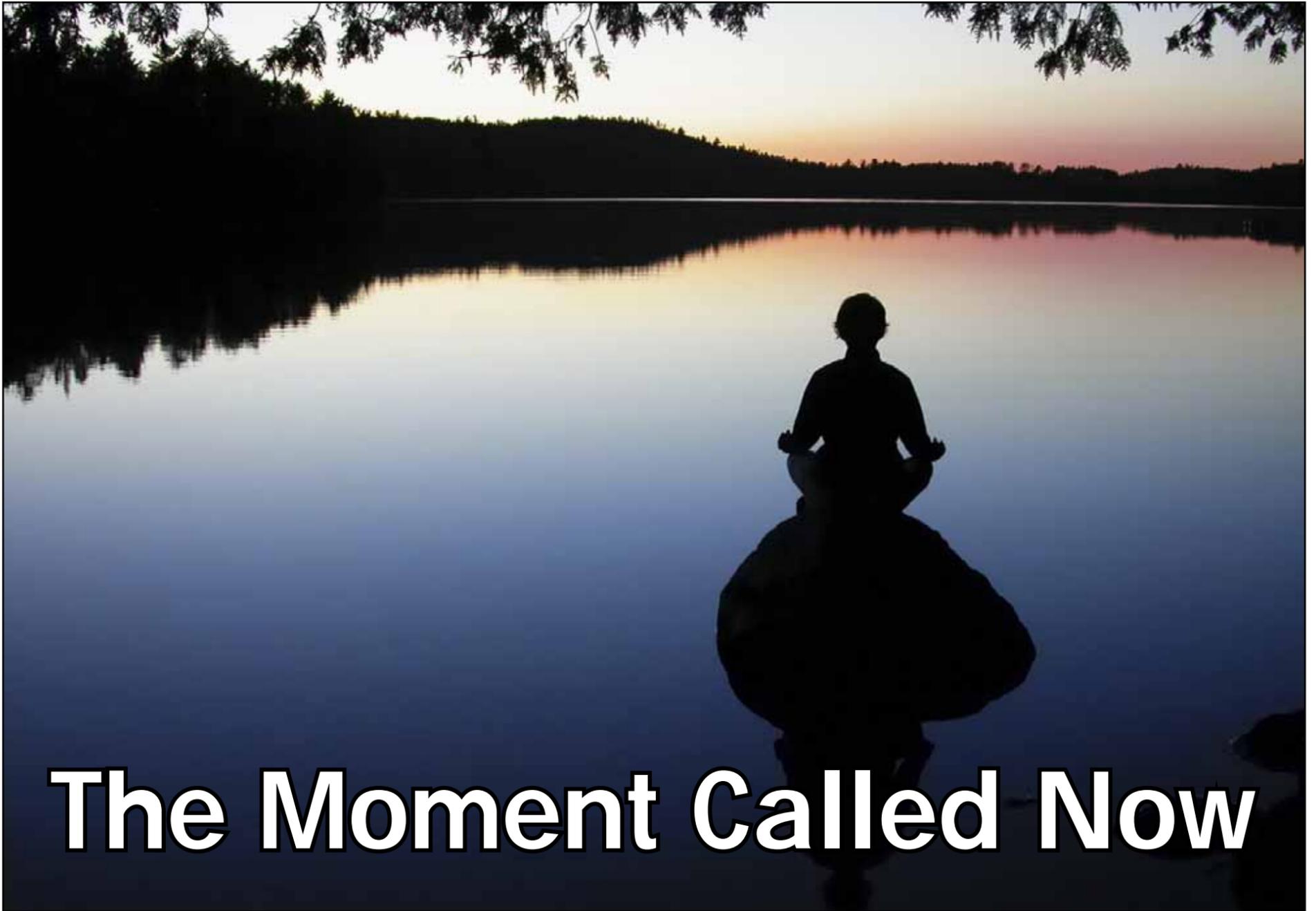


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WORDS OF PEACE



The Moment Called Now

“I’m not here to say what the future might bring,” says Prem Rawat, who has traveled far and wide for decades to bring a message of hope and peace to people throughout the world. “I don’t know about the future, and I don’t know about anyone’s past. I know about the moment called now.”

He’s not just playing with words.

“I am sure some people wonder what I am talking about, who say, ‘What is there in now?’” Mr. Rawat says. “The only reason I bring up the point of the moment called now is because that’s where peace resides. That’s where each of us resides. I don’t know how long now is, but that is where I live. Existence takes place now.

“Most people find that very challenging, because it’s too simple. ‘Of course we live now! Where else are we going to live?’ The reason they find it so challenging is that they know so little about it. They know the definition, and they know what I’m saying is true, but they have no idea what it actually means.”

The implications are important, he says, because, although we can only experience life moment by moment, our focus is anywhere but in the present.

“What does it have in it? The beauty of this moment called now is immense,” Mr. Rawat says. “It’s real. It’s not contemplation; it’s not a projection; it’s not somebody’s idea or dream. It’s

real—and far from being spooky, far from being dangerous, far from being like a scary movie, it’s actually the most beautiful and most magnificent experience. “Yet we’re always shooting off into the future or the past, thinking about what we’re going to do tomorrow or what happened yesterday. How much of the past taxes and drains us? How much? The past come back to haunt us, doesn’t it? The future taxes us: people wonder, ‘How are we going to become better?’ They think better means more money, an improved family life, a promotion, regaining health or reaching retirement. These are very important things in life, but why do they haunt people?”

“If you want to see this moment that you’re in, if you want to know who you are, if you want to be familiar with your potential, then you need to see certain elements in focus.

“The only thing that doesn’t haunt people is the present. It doesn’t because it brings life. It brings understanding. It brings consciousness. It brings awareness. It brings joy. Yet for us, it is too quick. We miss it again and again.

“There is a trick to not missing it. This is how it works: if you know now, then you can understand life, because now is where we live. By the rules of

time, you’re not allowed to live in tomorrow or yesterday. You can only exist now.

“How long is now? A snap of the fingers can be timed. It could be a second. Now is even shorter than that. When you recognize that speed, you see the value of now. You see the value of existence. Then, you can welcome into your life this moment of existence—welcome peace in your life.”

Well, it’s a great theory, people say, but can it really be done? Mr. Rawat says that to him, that’s not even a question, because he knows how it can be done—and he can help other people learn to discover the beauty of life in the now.

“From my perspective,” he says, “since I know how we can access that place inside, it’s not a problem. I know it can be done. The first question is what you want in your life. If you’re looking for that peace, if you are looking for that place where ultimate beauty is, go within. If you can’t find it, I can help.”

To learn more about Prem Rawat,
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SADHGURU

Sadhguru explains the significance of Uttarayana, which begins with the Winter Solstice and is traditionally seen as an auspicious time of the year.

Sadhguru: We are now at the threshold of Uttarayana, which is a period of harvest. The Sun's run in relation to planet Earth will shift from the southern run to the northern run – from Dakshinayana to Uttarayana. It is not that the sun is moving anywhere. What is happening in terms of celestial arrangement is that on the winter solstice on December 22, the sun was over the Tropic of Capricorn. From that day, if you watch the sunrise and the movement of the sun, slowly, every day it will shift to the north.

People who have been spiritually aware have always identified this transition as a possibility for human consciousness to blossom. Particularly, the first half of Uttarayana until the equinox in March is a period where the maximum amount of grace is available. The human system is more receptive to grace at that time than any other. History clearly indicates that the maximum number of people have attained in this phase of the sun in the Northern Hemisphere.

One of the most famous stories is of

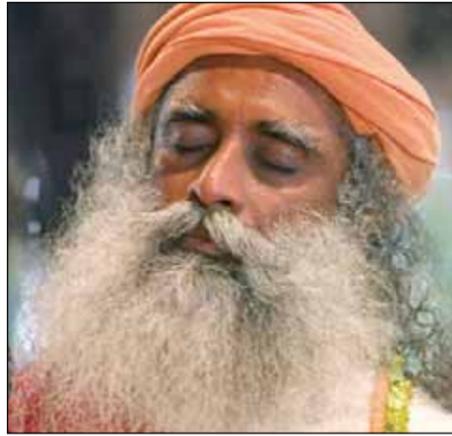


Bhishma waiting on his deathbed of arrows for many weeks. Though he was severely injured, he held onto his life until Uttarayana came because he wanted to make use of this transition in nature, to make his own transition possible. Gautama also attained on the third full moon day after Uttarayana. And in South India, there are examples of innumerable saints, sages, siddhas and yogis who have made the transition during this period.

During the southern run, what is below the anahata can be purified very easily. During the northern run, what is above the anahata can be worked much more easily. That is why in terms of sadhana, Dakshinayana is for purification. Uttarayana is for enlightenment. This is the period of receptivity, of grace and enlightenment, of attainment of the ultimate. This is the time to harvest, and it is also the reason agricultural harvests begin during this period. Pongal is the harvest festival. So it is not only the time of harvesting food grains, but also the time to harvest human potential.

In terms of sadhana, Dakshinayana is for purification. Uttarayana is for enlightenment.

At the beginning of Uttarayana, we have set up a certain opportunity for people to become more consciously receptive to grace. There will be 21 days of sadhana for ladies, which will start at the beginning of January up until what is called "Dhanya Pournami" or "Thaipusam" in Tamil Nadu. This sadhana will be given out to people wherever



Sadhguru Vasudev is a realized master, yogi and mystic, who has founded Isha Foundation, an international public service organization that strives for ultimate human well-being. For worldwide program information, visit www.ishafoundation.org

they may be. We also give a 42-day sadhana for men which will begin on Thaipusam and last until Mahashivarathri.

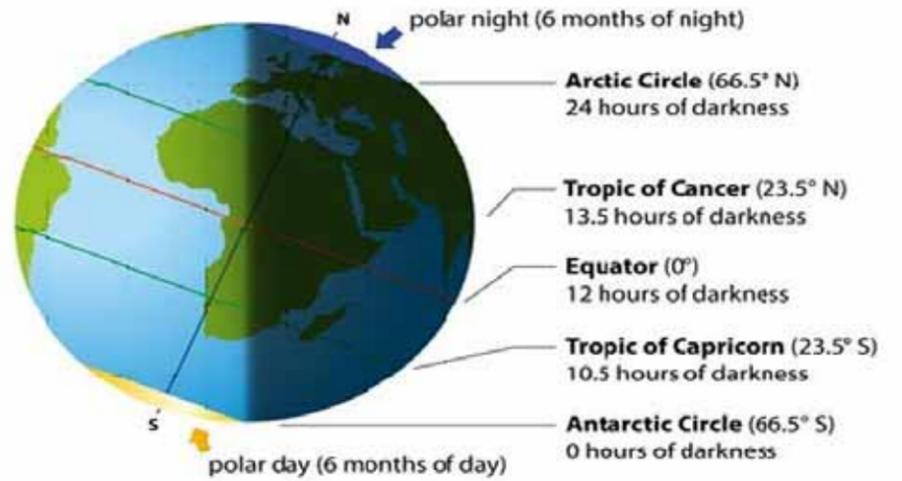
The human body, if brought to a certain level of intensity and sensitivity, is a cosmos by itself. Everything that happens in the external sphere, in a subtle way, manifests in the body. It is happening to everyone, it is just that most people do not notice this. But a more organized and purposeful rearrangement of the human mechanism could be done if one becomes conscious of the external movement and aligns that with the movement that is happening within the human system. If you want this body of flesh and bone to imbibe the nature of the cosmic body, understanding and being in tune with this movement of Uttarayana and Dakshinayana is very essential.

At the onset of the Tamil month of Margazhi, Sadhguru speaks about the spiritual significance of this time and how we can make use of it to create balance and stability within ourselves.

Sadhguru: We are at a time of the year which is considered significant for those on the spiritual path. The Tamil month of Margazhi starts from December 16th. At this time of year the planet Earth is closest to the sun. In the northern hemisphere this should have been the hottest month, but it is the coolest because the northern face of the planet is facing away from the sun. The closeness to the sun renders an angle where the sun's rays are diffused as they hit the planet. They fail to warm the earth as they would have if it were a little away. But in terms of the sun's gravity functioning on the planet, right now it is at the highest. January 3rd, 2014 is the day when the planet is closest to the sun, so the maximum pull of the sun's gravity happens at this time. That is the effect the Margazhi month has on the human system – it pulls you from the base.

Margazhi is a time to bring balance and stability to the system. There are practices in the yogic system which have been transmitted into the culture in many different ways. This is a time when men will do what generally women are supposed to do, and vice versa. In Tamil Nadu, men will go on-nagarasankeertan; they will sing and practice devotion – which are largely considered feminine. Geometry and masculinity are

winter solstice (December 21)



very directly connected. The feminine always pays maximum significance to an object's color and outer form. The masculine always sees the geometric base first. In this month, women practice geometry – not on paper, but in front of their homes, drawing geometrical figures or kolams.

Because of a general pull downward, the



muladhara (the foundation chakra), and thus the preservative nature of life, become dominant. All life in the northern hemisphere is at its minimum right now. If you plant a seed, the growth will be slowest at this time, and it will not sprout very well. Since the growth is held back by a certain inertia in the life force, this is a time the body can recoup and preserve itself well. Recognizing this, it is still maintained that there are never any marriages in Tamil Nadu during Margazhi. This is not a time for conception. Even grihastas, or householders, practice brahmacharya for this period.

This is also a good time particularly for those suffering from psychological imbalances because the sun's energy is pulling downward, and they can stabilize themselves. In the yogic system, if there is a psychological imbalance, it is always seen as water element going out of control. If you have a tank full of water and shake it, it will slosh. The water element causes various levels of imbalance in a person if the right kind of things are not done with it. Traditionally, in this month, there are various practices to be in touch with water. Generally, people don't want to miss the brahma muhurtam (3:40am, a conducive time for spiritual sadhana). One of the simplest things people do is go into temple ponds at 3:40am to take a dip.

The Margazhi brings a natural sense of stability into the system. There are a number of spiritual seekers who are constantly one step forward, one step back-

ward. This is happening to too many people because there is not enough sadhana towards stabilizing themselves. If you are pulled upward and you are not stable within yourself, it will lead to imbalances. This month is used for stability and the next month, the Thai, is used for mobility. If you have created enough stability within you, only then would you dare to be mobile. This is a time to create balance and stability.

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).

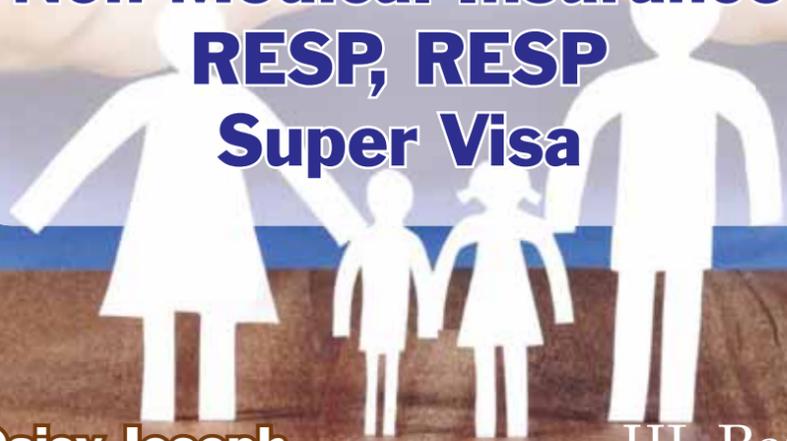
His interviews are featured in The New York Times, BBC, Bloomberg, CNN and CNBC. He is the author of several books, the subject of four books and co-author of the Amazon Bestseller "Midnights with the Mystic". His public talks frequently draw crowds of over 300,000 people.

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

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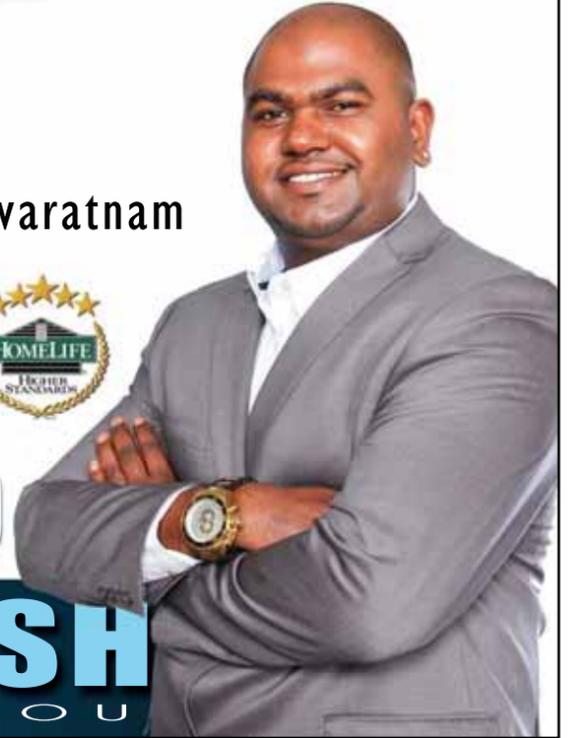


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TRIP TO RANGITOTO ISLAND IN AUCKLAND NEW ZEALAND

To view the youngest and largest extinct volcano



The tractor train which

C. Kamalaharan

It was my lifelong desire to see a volcano when I saw it in a movie during my school days. I was fully aware of the destructive nature of a volcano when it erupts and the hot lava that flows down burning everything that comes its way. But I was keen only to get a closer view of an extinct volcano and observe the vast changes it had brought to the areas surrounding it. When we planned a trip to New Zealand the first thing that struck my mind was to arrange a trip also to Rangitoto Island which has the youngest and biggest volcano in Auckland's volcanic field.

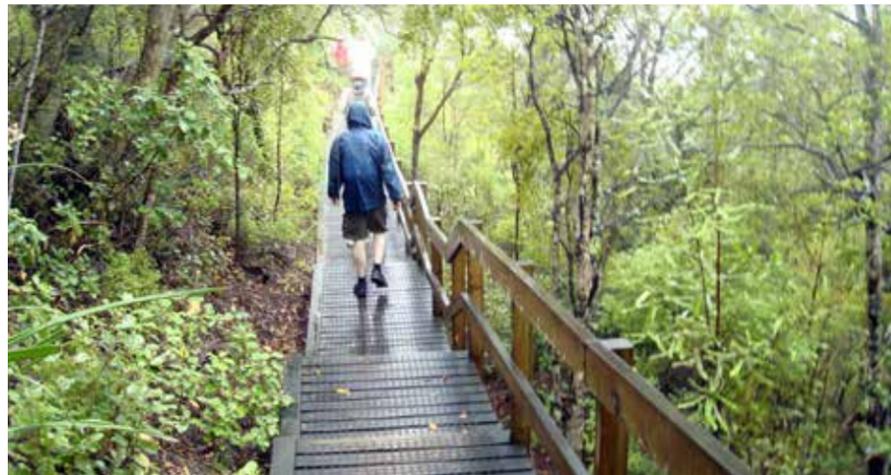
As we alighted from the ferry and stepped into the island we felt as though we were entering a strange world completely different from the other habitations. The volcanic island 5.5 km wide that erupted from the sea with a series of explosions about 600 years ago is now defunct. It now appears at a distance as a distinctive symmetrical cone rising 260 meters above sea level.

We took a 25 minute ride in a ferry to the Rangitoto Island enjoying the scenic beauty around us and the stunning view of the coastline. As we advanced closer the rugged lava crops, lush native bush and the sandy coves of the island came into view. At the wharf where tourists disembark the only public transport available is the tractor drawn train that co-ordinates with the ferry service and takes tourists on a guided tour of the island.

The tractor drawn train took us through long stretches of lava fields, forests, exposed clinker like lava stones called scoria and arrived at the base of the summit on the eastern side of the volcano. While travelling we enjoyed the unfamiliar sights of the island's interior and the coastal areas. A tour guide who accompanied us provided commentary about the

history, geology and the flora and fauna of the island. After alighting from the tractor drawn train we walked along the boardwalk and arrived at the summit of the volcano. Tourists who are fit enough can walk from the wharf along the wooden summit tract and reach the summit. As it was raining we were provided with thick transparent raincoats covering the whole body. From the summit we had breathtaking views of the mainland and the Hauraki Gulf.

At the summit there is another tract that took us encircling the rim of the crater to have a closer view of



Walk

it. After enjoying the 360-degree view from the summit we descended along the western side of the volcano and reached the ferry.

A short diversion on the walk up to the summit takes tourists on foot through lava tunnels and caves that were formed by the flow of the hot lava liquid during the volcano's eruptions. Tourists are instructed to carry a torch light when they walk through the lava tunnels and caves. They are also instructed to wear sturdy clean footwear when they walk through the island's rugged lava surfaces. After visiting the lava

tunnels and the caves tourists can return to the summit tract along the sign posted tract. As we went unprepared for a walk through the lava tunnels and caves we continued our walk along the boardwalk and reached the summit.

There are no streams in the island as such plants have to rely mainly on rainfall thereby creating an unfavourable environment for plants to survive on the lava rocks. Yet more than 200 species of native trees and flowering plants thrive on the island which includes several species of orchids and more than 40 species of ferns. Besides these plants mosses and lichens also grow on the bare lava rocks.

Rangitoto being a pest free island providing sanctuary for wildlife, tourists are advised to check their bags before setting off on the journey to find out whether any rats, mice or other insect pests have stayed unnoticed in their bags. They should also ensure that weeds do not cling on to their clothing and shoes.

Tourists are also advised to take water and food in pest proof containers as there are no shops to purchase them in the island. They



Crator



Orchids



Rangitoto Tangle fern

ensure that they do not miss the ferry back to the mainland otherwise travelling by private transport is very expensive.

Though Rangitoto Island without any population appears deserted, stepping into its wilderness to view the extinct volcano at close range and the tremendous changes it had brought about is a worthwhile lifetime experience.

should also take with them hats and sunscreen to protect the skin from the damaging ultraviolet rays. In the absence of facilities to remove garbage in Rangitoto Island tourists have to take them when they leave the island.

Under the control of the Department of Conservation camping in the island is allowed by obtaining permit that too for camping during day time only. Overnight stay is not permitted as the entire island will be plunged in darkness after sunset, in the absence of power supply. And most importantly tourists must



Land



Rangitoto panorama



Evolution of Modern Calendar

By: Raymond Rajabalan



Calendars have become very closely involved in our lives in some form or other. They have become a useful tool for us to remember the important religious days, keeping appointments, planning various events, scheduling holidays etc

During ancient times men measured time based on the phases of moon and the environmental changes that result from the orbital movements of Sun. With the passage of time, due to the growth of civilization in the various communities throughout the world, a number of improved methods of measuring the time were devised, resulting in the creation of the modern day calendar.

The word calendar owes its origin to the Latin word "Kalends", meaning a ledger or accounts book. During various stages of the history of mankind, calendars were subjected to various forms of reforms by a number of scholars and astronomers resulting in the development of the modern day Gregorian calendar. This calendar having seven day week helps us to accurately measure the time.

Evolution of Gregorian calendar



It is generally believed that the first calendar was developed by Egyptians during 2500 B.C. Later on in 713 B.C, Numa Pompilius, the second king of

Roman Empire promulgated a calendar reform that adjusted the solar and lunar years and included the months of January and February in the existing 10-month calendar. This reformed 12 month calendar was used as the official calendar throughout Rome

Julian calendar



The Julian calendar a reform of the Roman calendar was introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 BC and came into force in 45 BC. It was chosen after consultation with the astronomer Sosigenes of Alexandria. It has a regular year of 365 days divided into 12 months, and a leap day is added to February every four years. Hence the Julian year is on average 365.25 days long.

The Julian calendar remained in use into the 20th century in some countries as a national calendar, but it has generally been replaced by the modern Gregorian calendar. It is still used by the Berber people of North Africa and by many national Orthodox churches. Those Orthodox Churches that no longer use Julian calendar typically use the Revised Julian calendar rather than the Gregorian calendar.

Gregorian calendar



The Gregorian calendar is the most widely used calendar in the world to-

day. It is a reform of the Julian calendar, first proposed by the Calabrian doctor Aloysius Lilius, and decreed by Pope Gregory XIII, for whom it was named, on 24 February 1582 by papal decree. Years in the reformed calendar continued the numbering system of the Julian calendar, which are numbered from the traditional Incarnation year of Jesus, labeled as the "Anno Domini" (AD) era

The changes made by Pope Gregory also corrected the drift in the civil calendar which arose because the average Julian calendar year was slightly too long. The Gregorian calendar system dealt with the drawbacks in Julian calendar by dropping 10 days to bring the calendar back into synchronization with the seasons, and adopting the following leap year rule:

Every year that is exactly divisible by four is a leap year, except for years that are exactly divisible by 100; the centurial years that are exactly divisible by 400 are still leap years. For example, the year 1900 is not a leap year but the year 2000 is a leap year.

In the Julian calendar, all years exactly divisible by 4 were leap years.

Determining the length of Day

We measure the length of time from midnight up to the midnight of the fol-

lowing day as one day. But according to astronomers, an indigenous race called Umbri that lived in central Italy during the second century, defined a day as the time period from noon to the following day noon. Hebrews measured the time period from one sunset to the next sunset as a day. Babylonians, Egyptians Chinese and Hindu priests used to measure the time between two consecutive sun rises as a day.

Evolution of the names of months

The 12 months in a year have been calculated based on the growth phase of Moon. September, October, November and December were named based on the Latin numbering system. July and August were named after the Roman emperors Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar. January and June derived their names from Greek Gods Janus and Juno. March was named after Mars, the Roman God of War. February was named after the Latin term februum, which means purification, via the purification ritual Februa held on February 15 in the old Roman calendar. The derivation of the name (Latin Aprilis) is uncertain. Since most of the Roman months were named in honor of divinities, and as April was sacred to Venus the Goddess of love, it has been suggested that Aprilis was originally her month Aphrilis, from her Greek name Aphrodite. There are no records regarding the origin of the name for the month of May.

History of change in the number of days in Roman-Gregorian calendars

Changes in the number of days per year in Roman & Gregorian Calendar

Calendar originated by	Romulus	Numa	Julius	Augustus	Gregory
Number of Days/Year	303	355	365	365	365

- During the reign of Romulus, a year consisted of 10 months and 303 days.

- In eighth century, Numa Pompilius, the second king of Roman Empire added two more months January and February and created a 12-month calendar consisting of 355 days.

- After six more centuries, Julius Caesar paid a visit to Egypt and after consulting some scholars decided to introduce some changes in the existing Roman calendar.

With the advise of astronomer Sosigenes of Alexandria new calendar with 365 days was created. It was divided into 12 months, and a leap day added to February every four years.

At the same time the seventh month of the year hitherto known as Quintilis was changed as July in honour of Julius Caesar.

- Augustus Caesar who ascended into power after the assassination of Julius Caesar changed the name of the eighth month from Sextilis into August in his honour. Also as per his request one day was reduced from February and added to August. As a result the number of days in February was reduced to 29 while the number for August was increased to 31 days.



Special Feature

By: R.T. Ramachandran

It has been 10 years since a devastating tsunami hit coastal areas in the Indian Ocean. On the morning of December 26, 2004, a 30 meter high wave struck 1000 kilometers of Sri Lankan coastline without warning, devastating hundreds of thousands of lives and livelihoods. The tsunami, which was the most devastating natural disaster in Sri Lanka's history, resulted in losses of over \$1 billion in assets and \$330 million in potential output, according to government estimates.

Approximately 35,000 people died or went missing. The damage included 110,000 houses, of which 70,000 were completely destroyed. Around 250,000 families lost their means of support. In

release of energy very slightly altered the Earth's rotation, the exact amount is not yet known.

There was 10 m movement laterally and 4–5 m vertically along the fault line. Some of the smaller islands south-west of Sumatra, which is on the Burma Plate, moved south-west by up to about 20 cm. Since movement was vertical as well as lateral, some coastal areas have been moved to below sea level. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands appear to have shifted south-west by around 1.25 m and to have sunk by 1 m. More spectacularly, there was 10 m movement laterally and 4–5 m vertically along the fault line.

2004 Tsunami and my family

To me and my family it was at Casu-

rina Beach in Jaffna, where we encountered the 2004 Tsunami. We living in Colombo, came down to Jaffna on a holiday with our son-in-law. On that fateful day, we went with my eldest sister to Casurina Beach in Karainagar about 2 km away from my sister's place in Moolai, where we had stayed overnight. We reached the beach around 9 am. I still remember we spent about 15 minutes at shops in Karainagar to purchase a film roll for the camera. Those 15 minutes made all the difference, for our plan was to return

to my brother's place in the city for lunch with some sightseeing on the way including this beach that we had frequented many times in the past. At the beach, we parked our vehicle and walked few meters towards the sea. After having admired the scenery opted to get a group photo taken and handed the camera to a youth at the beach. As we were posing for the photo, while on dry grounds and not facing the sea. All of a sudden massive volumes of water displaced due to the tsunami arrived at our location in large waves. This was about three hours after the earthquake occurred off the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia. By then it had spent 75% of its energy on route coming over to the north-west coast of Sri Lanka.

The first large wave stuck us on the side at waist level and saw the youth fall into water with the camera and we too losing control fell into to the rising sea. Before we could realise what had happened within seconds another wave taller than the first hit us and within minutes few more waves followed and we were dragged inland in different directions by the ever increasing water level. In no time, we were in about 5 to 7 meters of water, for those days the beach floor was not level. Youngest daughter was the lucky one for she was pushed on to a ridge. She was able to anchor her feet in the sand, when after 15 minutes water started retreating back to the sea. Fortunately, I managed to latch on to a wooden beam of an old hut that was in the beach,

when water was receding into the sea. Son-in-law was able to react fast, enough to keep his head above water, grabbed

eldest daughter by one hand and my sister by the other hand, while resting his body against the trunk of a large casurina tree to prevent them getting dragged into the rough sea. By now youngest daughter, who was most alert during the crisis cried shouting that her mother was nowhere on sight. We all panicked and started calling out for her. Water had pushed us few meters inland and we were at the place where vehicles were parked, which all were floating in the water with its heavy front end immersed in water. While searching for my wife, we saw many others hanging holding on to near-

weeks with further medical treatment for her to return to normal life.

But today we still have some scars to remind us of the horrific experience. We lost the camera, our wallets and few other belongings' the vehicle had to be pulled out of the muddy beach and engine overhauled to get it back on the road. But we are thankful to have escaped death that day and let us remember the thousands who lost their life that day and share the sorrow with the grieved families..

Prepared to face natural disasters in future

We must thank the medical staff at Karainagar Base Hospital and the Jaffna Teaching Hospital for providing good service. Especially the Jaffna Hospital,

The 2004 Tsunami Anniversary

The Story of A Tsunami Survivor

Sri Lanka (figures for all fourteen affected countries are shown in bracket) there were 35,322 (~230,273) dead, 21,411 (~125,000) injured and 516,150 (~1.74 million) displaced.

The 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake that occurred at 00:58:53 UTC on Sunday, 26 December 2004, with an epicenter off the west coast of Sumatra, Indonesia known as the Sumatra–Andaman earthquake and the resulting tsunami was called the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The earthquake was caused when the Indian Plate was sub ducted by the Burma Plate and triggered a series of devastating tsunamis along the coasts of most landmasses bordering the Indian Ocean, killing over 230,000 people in fourteen countries, and inundating coastal

communities with waves up to 30 meters high. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history. Indonesia was the hardest-hit country, followed by Sri Lanka, India, and Thailand. The sudden vertical rise of the seabed by several meters during the earthquake displaced massive volumes of water, resulting in a tsunami that struck the coasts of the Indian Ocean.

The energy released on the Earth's surface by the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami was equivalent to over 1500 times that of the Hiroshima atomic bomb. The vast majority of total work by this quake was done underground and based on the energy consumption of United States 2005 figures is about 370 years of energy. The earthquake generated a seismic oscillation of the Earth's surface of up to 20–30 cm, equivalent to the effect of the tidal forces caused by the Sun and Moon. The shock waves of the earthquake were felt as far away as the U.S. state of Oklahoma, where vertical movements of 3 mm were recorded. By February 2005, the earthquake's effects were still detectable as a 20 μm complex harmonic oscillation of the Earth's surface, which gradually diminished and merged with the incessant free oscillation of the Earth. The shift of mass and the massive

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by casurina trees. We noticed our vehicle, which was nose dipped and floating with the free end of wife's saree floating by the side of it. We rushed to her and managed to pull my wife out of the path of the floating vehicle. Few minutes late would have buried her alive in the mud by the vehicle due to its full weight. She had inhaled lot of muddy water and was not fully conscious and had to carry her. We had to rush her to the hospital and vehicles at the beach were all not drivable. The path from beach to the road was muddy and with broken tree trunks and barbed wire that had come loose from the damaged fence. By now the news had gone round and crowd started pouring into the beach to see the tragedy. This made it difficult for us to carry a sinking patient out to the hospital.

As we carried my wife out of the beach area, on the road others came to help and we took her in a vehicle to the nearby Base Hospital at Karainagar, where she was taken care by the house officer and we for cuts and bruises received first aid at the hospital. Doctor advised us to take her to the General Hospital as the pulse rate was dropping. We took her by ambulance to the General Hospital, where she was admitted for four days, before returning to Colombo, where it took several

where wife was admitted as the first tsunami victim, but within in minutes many patients arrived from Vadamarachchi region and soon hospital ran out of beds and late arrivals had to lie on the floor. It was very refreshing to see many medical students volunteering to assist the medical staff at the hospital.

The catastrophe exposed huge gaps in how prepared the country was to deal with natural disasters. Despite a lag of up to several hours between the earthquake and the impact of the tsunami, nearly all of the victims were taken completely by surprise. There were no tsunami warning systems in the Indian Ocean to detect tsunamis or to warn the general populace living around the ocean. Tsunami detection is not easy because while a tsunami is in deep water it has little height and a network of sensors is needed to detect it. Setting up the communications infrastructure to issue timely warnings is an even bigger problem, particularly in a relatively poor part of the world. After the 2004 tsunami Sri Lanka has put in operation a tsunami warning system and it is hoped when we face the next tsunami there will be less casualties and damages to properties.

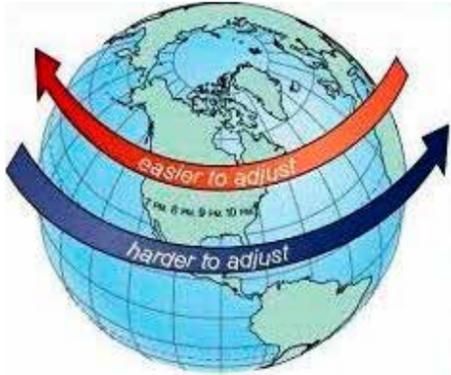


COMBATING JET LAG DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

JET LAG SYMPTOMS DEPEND ON THE TRAVEL DIRECTION

By: Uthayan Thurairajah

Over the holiday season many of us will be jumping planes to visit family and friends. A long haul flight can be exhausting and quite devastating experience. Even short flights can drain our energy. Jet lag happens when our internal circadian clock, the part of our brain that regulates our sleep cycles, is disrupted by travel. The difference between external clock and our internal clock can make us dizzy, weak and ill. "It is not because you have been on a plane for that long," said Dr. Russell Rosenberg, the Atlanta School of Sleep Medicine. We are trying to harmonize with environmental time when our



own internal core time can't move that fast. Jet lag affects our whole body. Symptoms include stomach upset, deep fatigue, fuzzy-headedness, absentmindedness, slow-wittedness, poor concentration, weakness, disrupted bowel movements, and changes in the frequency of urination.

For example, we fly out of Toronto just after lunch around 3pm. When it would have been time for our dinner at 7pm, our stomach is going to release enzymes and stomach acids in anticipation of food, but when we touch down in Vancouver, it's only going to be 4pm, too late for lunch, too early for supper. Three hours later (local time 7pm), our bodily functions would have started shutting down in anticipation of usual sleep time, 10pm.

Jet lag takes three to four days to overcome naturally. When you travel from east to west, we are required to stay up late, which is more acceptable to your body than going to bed early. The recovery will usually take less than 50% of time. If we are flying east, it is hard to shift our body clock earlier. Age is also a factor in our ability to cope with jet lag. Infants experience jet lag and recover very quickly. It is harder to adjust to rapid time zone shifts as we grow older. Healthy people cope better with jet lag than poor health people, whose body rhythms have already been disrupted. Jet lag will make us feel even worse if we travel while sick. If we take prescription drugs during our trip, jet lag may impair their effectiveness.

Several other factors influence our capacity to cope with east-west travel. Outgoing types, who love to meet new people, mix among various social groups, and travel in a pack, tend to cope better with jet lag than people who reach a destination and retreat to their rooms with a book or remote control. If we expose more ourselves to new external environment, the necessary chemical changes will take place faster in our brain to help us adapt to our new surroundings.

How to Prepare for Jet Lag

Two major approaches can be used for speeding up the healing process of jet lag. We can mitigate the symptoms with drugs, and we can actually change our body clock with light therapy. For



brief trips, we can limit the signs of jet lag without having to take any drugs. We can try the following tricks for next time flight.

- Start resetting our body clock before we fly. Shift our bedtime by an hour or two in the right direction starting three days before our trip.

- The minute we step into the airplane cabin, adopt the hour of the time zone we're traveling to. Reset our watch and start to think according to the new time zone.

- Cabin lighting can be setup such a way to adapt to the new time zone. Some new flights have these features.

- Avoid drinking alcohol or drugs, such as Dramamine or motion-sickness drugs, before, and during the flight.

- Eat light food before and while in the air.

- Daytime naps after the arrival but keep shorter so that it doesn't interfere with the nighttime sleep.

- Drink lots of water before, during, and after our flight. Experts recommend water drink just before departure and in the air.

Light Therapy and medicine to Treat Jet Lag

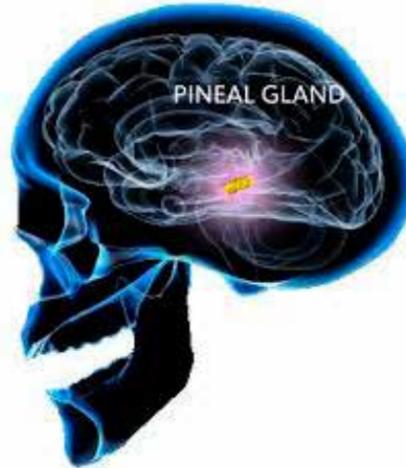
Exposure to light is the best way to resynchronize our circadian rhythms. If we're traveling from Toronto to Europe, it actually helps if we avoid light in the early morning for the first few days and seek the light once our body clock thinks, 11:30 am (It is Toronto time 5:30am -- that's 11:30am), western European time.

Light-therapy devices and the information can help to figure out when to seek or avoid bright light. A light box sits on a table and blasts light at us to reset our rhythms. If we need to find light when it's dark outside, we can use special light boxes, light visors or just blast indoor lights. If we need to make things darker and we can't stay in a darkened room, we can use low-transmittance sunglasses.

The hormone melatonin and the prescription medications Ambien (Zolpidem) and Nuvigil all do different things to help with

jet lag. Melatonin helps alter our circadian rhythms. Ambien and Nuvigil knock you out and keep you awake respectively. The two prescription drugs don't actually fix jet lag but help to manage the symptoms. A study by Dr. Sack showed that 10 mg of generic Ambien significantly improved sleep quality for eastbound travelers. His article recommends a short-duration sleeping pill like Sonata if we aim to knock out while in the air.

A study published by the Mayo Clinic in June 2010, 150 mg of Nuvigil issued to people taking an eastbound trip

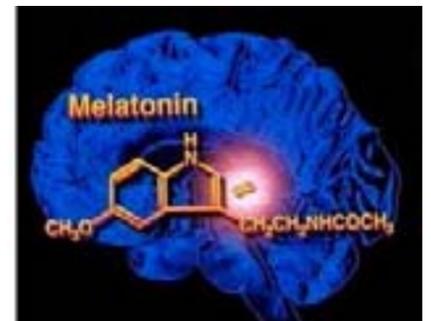


helped them feel more awake on the first two days after their trip, reducing that horrible dipping, sleepy feeling we get with eastbound jet lag. Nuvigil legal in Canada but it hasn't been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat jet lag, Dr. Rosenberg notes, but he says it offers travelers an excellent option for promoting wakefulness when they have

to hit the ground running. Dr. Sack's article says that a strong hit of caffeine can also make you more alert, but with caffeine, you risk making jet-lag-related insomnia worse.

Melatonin is a hormone that occurs naturally in the body, secreted by the pineal gland in the forebrain, and induces sleep. Daylight and artificial light limit the natural production melatonin, but when night falls the pineal gland releases the hormone into the bloodstream and triggers the sleep cycle. Melatonin not only induces sleep but improves sleep quality as well. Take a dose of melatonin 2 hours before bedtime on an eastbound trip will trick your body into thinking that night has fallen earlier. Dr. Sack suggests taking a 3-mg dose of melatonin in the evening if heading east, and taking 0.5-mg dose if you wake up too early when heading west. He also suggests not taking both melatonin and Ambien; the combination is associated with higher amounts of sleepiness and confusion.

If we take too much melatonin, we may suffer a leftover and feel confused the following day. Clinical tests have shown melatonin to be non-addictive, non-toxic, and safe, and it causes very few side effects. Make sure to get



melatonin from a trusted pharmacist - although sold over the counter, the quality of melatonin is completely unregulated, so there's no guarantee that what we buy at the health food store is actually melatonin. If we pay attention to these details, we can combat jet lag and stay healthy during the festive season.

Uthayan Thurairajah is a Senior Professional Engineer and Lighting Designer at MMM Group, and teaches Human Factors in Lighting in the Department of Communication and Design at Ryerson University. He is also a research collaborator for the Centre for Aircraft Interiors Research and Innovations (CAIRI) at Ryerson University. Uthayan is member of several Canadian and international professional association including American Holistic Medical Association and Alternative Medicine. He has worked on numerous multi-disciplinary lighting, traffic signals and power projects for the Ministry of Transportation and various Towns, Municipalities, Regions and others. He also has extensive research experience on the value of lighting design in the mental, emotional, and social well-being of a person. He is a frequent presenter and author on lighting design & health.



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Calendar Calculation Find out the day you were born!

By Richard Jeyaranjan,
MD, PhD, FRCPC

Anywhere numbers are arranged in an orderly fashion, there is predictability to the pattern. A calendar is such a collection of numbers. Unfortunately, we use one calendar for one year and change it year after year. While there should be a way to have a perpetual calendar which is not cumbersome to use, such an item does not exist. However, the smallest perpetual calendar can be made by calculation. We can find the day of the week we were born, day of the week important events in the history took place, and dates of the month a particular holiday will fall if we know the pattern of recurrence of such a holiday. The method described in this article is not new, but it is written here in an easier to understand way.

The method described in this article works only for the Gregorian calendar which is in

widespread use and for the Julian calendar which is no longer in use. This may not work for other calendars as it is not validated for them. As this method is already in place for at least decades, it is built into computations done by electronic devices. My purpose of describing the method in this article is to improve mental math of the readership as I have done in a previous article. It is for an aging generation that does not have a lot of access or ability to utilize electronic devices without undergoing formal training or undue hardships. The article paves the way for both seniors and juniors to track down historical events to the day of the week and from there make whatever assumptions or predictions according to their own version of the meaning of that particular day of the week. In this regard, it should be mentioned that the days of the week were in fact named based on the sun and its planets.

In order to calculate the day of week for a specific date or dates of a month belonging to a particular day of the week repeating every seven days, there are certain basic facts that have to be established. There are of course seven days in a week and 12 months in a year, but the length of a year is $365\frac{1}{4}$ days, less by 11 minutes. A leap year was created every four years, with some exceptions noted later, with an extra day in order to account for the extra six hours (5 hours and 49 minutes to be precise) from each year and other three years were set to have 365 days. If every month has 28 days or four weeks, calendar calculation will be a lot easier, but in order to account for 365 days in a year, there have to be some months with more than 28 days and these months should in total have 29 (365-336) extra days. April, June, September, and November have 2 additional days (30 days each) and all others, except February, have 3 additional days (31 days each). This is how the additional 29 days are fitted into a year.



If year turns out to be a leap year, that one extra day is to be added to the month of February.

Given the above complexity involving the number of days in a month, any calculation involving calendars has to have a special code for each and every month. These codes are somewhat complicated but are easier to memorize than calculate which is also possible. The basic assumption is that a week is seven days long and every seven days the next week starts with day 1. To start on 1, number 7 should be considered 0. It so happens the month February has a code of 2 if the year is not a leap year, also called a common year. There is a reason for this code, but it is more complicated to understand than to remember that the second month has a code of 2. If February has code 2, the preceding month January has to have code 6 because January, unlike February, has 31 days, and to 6 one has to add the additional three days to get 9 which translates to 2 using a seven-day week as the yard-stick. If the year is a leap year, then these two codes are less by one, 5 for January and 1 for February, respectively. This change keeps the codes of other ten months unchanged even if it is a leap year.

The month of March in a common year starts with the exact same day of the week that February started because February has 28 days. The code for the month of March is therefore the same as February which is 2. In a leap year, February has 29 days and March starts a day later than the first day of February which will keep the code for March unchanged at 2 since, as mentioned above, the code for February being changed to 1. Since March has 31 days, the code for April is 2 plus 3, becomes 5, and since April has 30 days, the code for May is 0 as 7 (5+2) is also treated as zero in this calculation. If you keep working on the subsequent months of the year, you will find codes for June as 3, July 5, August 1, September 4, October 6, November 2, and December 4. Once again, when seven is reached, it is treated as zero since the next number is 1. It is noticeable that months that have the exact same days of the week, such as September &

December and March & November, have the exact same month codes. There are many ways to remember these codes

using mnemonics or some other method that makes sense for the individual. For example, one can remember January as 5 or 6 because Thai Pongal is on January either 14 or 15 and May as zero because it is the smallest word among the names of the months.

Once a few month codes are remembered, other month codes are easier to calculate.

Once you master the codes of the months, the calculation becomes almost as easy as counting numbers. There are codes for years but they are the same as the last two numbers for that year added to a code for that particular century which, as the name implies, changes every 100 years.

For year 2000 onwards, the code is zero which makes it a lot easier to use this method for this century. For the century starting in 1900, the code is 1, 1800 it is 3, 1700 it's 5, and for 1600 it's back to zero. These codes are based on the first day of these centuries. For example, January 1, 2000 was a Sunday and January 1, 1900 was a Monday. As discussed later in this paragraph, these are simply the seventh and first days of a week. In essence then, the calculation boils down to adding the century code, year code, month code, and the date, but there has to be an adjustment for the number of leap years that occurred since the beginning of that particular century. To this end, an additional day has to be added to each and every leap year that has passed. This is done by dividing the last two digits of the year by four and adding the number of times such a division can be done. The final equation is would then be century code plus year code plus the number of leaps plus month code plus the date. The final answer is then divided by seven to calculate the day of the week from the remainder. If the remainder is zero, it refers to the seventh day of week which has always been Sunday dating back to biblical times. Most calendars in the print format display Sunday and Saturday at the two ends of the week, but this is only for avoiding confusion. A remainder of six refers to Saturday and similarly a remainder of one refers to Monday which is easy to remember as the first day of a work week.

It is conceivable that some readers may want to do the above calculation on

an electronic

calculator. When one totals the century code, year code, number of leaps, month code, and the date, then divides the total by 7, final answer will have what is called a decimal expansion. Decimal expansion means the remainder in decimals keeps expanding and repeating. As an example, dividing 1 by 7 gives an answer of 0.1428571428571 repeating and dividing 2 by 7 will start with the answer 0.2857142857142 repeating. This is a very unique situation in mathematics which one can take advantage of for this calculation. On a digital calculator the answer one gets in decimals would be a multiple of 14 (or an approximate) if the remainder is rounded to a 2-digit whole number. Using this approach, if it is 0.14, remainder is 1, 0.28 for 2, 0.42 for 3, 0.57 for 4, 0.71 for 5, and 0.85 for 6. A digital calculator, therefore, can be used for this type of calculation once this method of simplifying the remainder is understood.

I think by now a lot of readers would be thinking that there must be a more easy lazy way to do these calculations. Sure there is. Those who have internet access can find the day of the week for any day by doing a search. Then there are others who do not want or like such a method.

Thankfully, the calendar repeats every 28 years and therefore, the calendar of year 2014 is identical to that of 1986. Those who want to use this simpler method have to look for a calendar of more recent years with the year that is an exact multiple of 28. For example, if one was born in 1955, you need the calendar of 2011 to see the day of the week he/she was born. This simple method is valid only for years between 1901 and 2099, and not for those earlier or later. This is because years 1900 and 2100 are not leap years and a leap year comes only every 400 years at the dawn of centuries. This was done to account for those 11 minutes of added time mentioned earlier. This correction was not done in the Julian calendar whereas the Gregorian includes this adjustment.

Assimilating all of the above facts, this article ends with two examples of calculation of the day of week for the remembrance day in 2014 and 1986. For year 2014, one begins with zero as the century code of zero, adds 14 for 2014, then 3 for the number of leap years since the dawn of this century (dividing 14 by 3), then 2 for month of November, and 11 for the date. The total is 30 which leaves a remainder of 2 when divided by 7. Similarly, for year 1986, one begins with 1, then adds 86, then 21 for the number of leaps, 2 for November, and 11 for date. The total is 121 which when divided by 7 also leaves a remainder of 2. Mastering this skill of calendar calculation will be highly useful in many walks of life and will come handy in many situations.



MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Your RRSP roll-over options

David Joseph, M.A.(Economics), CFP®, CLU

Remember when the perfect picture of retirement was a grandmotherly woman and a grandfatherly man sitting on a porch knitting and whittling away their sunset years? Well, maybe that was once an accurate depiction of retirement but it certainly isn't today. Today's retirees are active and looking forward to many years of excitement, fulfillment and fun!

What have you got planned for retirement – travel to terrific locations, RV-ing across the continent, volunteering for your favourite charity, adding to your education, or even starting a new business?

Whatever your retirement plans, you need a few things to make your retirement dreams come true: good health, a positive attitude and, of course, money. That's why you've built your retirement savings for so many years – because you know your good financial health is essential if you want your third age to be as wonderful, personal and fun-filled as you wish.

Sure, you'll have to use some of your nest egg income to cover essential expenses for food, health care, utilities and other everyday living costs. But how you choose to use the rest of your money is entirely up to you. The key is to make sure you have enough money to fund your essential needs and fun interests – whatever they may be -- for all your retirement years. And that takes planning – the same kind of planning that went into building your retirement nest egg in the first place.

Your retirement financial plan should make sure your hard-earned investments last longer and go farther. It should ensure a steady, predictable cash flow that

will cover all your expenses. And that means being very selective about your investment options.

You've already made a very wise choice by establishing a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) and faithfully contributing to it for many years. Now it's time to reap the rewards by using your plan funds as part (probably an important part) of your retirement income. And, if you're turning 71 by the end of this year, you are required by law to wind down your RRSP before 2015. Either way, you have some important choices to make. You have three basic RRSP roll-over options to choose from and the right choices can help make the most of those funds through all your retirement years. These are your roll-over options:

- Cash out your plan. Definitely not recommended because you will likely be taxed on the total amount right away at your highest marginal rate.

- A Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF) -- the preferred roll-over choice for most Canadians. Just like an RRSP, a RRIF generates investment returns that combine with the principal amount to create an income stream. Your money will continue to grow tax free until you take it out as income. You can't contribute any additional money to a RRIF and you'll pay taxes on the amounts you withdraw. Depending on your age, you must withdraw minimum amounts from your RRIF each year but there is no limit on the maximum amount you can withdraw (although you won't want to deplete your RRIF too soon).

- Purchase an annuity -- the second most popular RRSP roll-over option. An

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annuity is a financial product that pays you a regular income for a fixed period or the rest of your life. They are often used for transforming a lump sum of money into a dependable income stream. You contract with a financial institution to receive a regular income (usually monthly) for life or to a specified age in exchange for a fixed amount of money. There's no need to manage the securities but your payments will be fixed and won't increase to compensate for inflation or rising living costs. As well, if you purchase an annuity at a low interest rate, your payments will be lower over the life of the annuity. Many types of annuities are available, from 'life annuities' to 'term to 90' annuities that provide income to age 90.

There can be definite advantages to transferring a portion of your RRSP as-

sets to a RRIF and the remainder to a life annuity that provides the income to pay for basic expenses.

There are two steps to ensuring you make the right roll-over choices for your personal situation: First, start planning well in advance; and second, talk to your professional advisor about the best RRSP conversion options for you.

Disclaimer:

This report specifically written and published as a general source of information only, and is not intended as a solicitation for mortgage or to buy/sell specific investments or insurance, nor is it intended to provide investment advice. For more information on this topic, please contact me.

Cutting your grocery bill a matter of watching your waste

People gotta eat, right? And many probably don't realize how much they spend on groceries because you don't always think about your spending when it comes to the staples of life. There are things that you can do to lower your monthly grocery bill, though, so it doesn't break your budget.

First of all, make a list and withdraw the cash with which to buy the groceries. You are more likely to spend less when you're paying with the cash you have in hand than when you whip out a card and pay "whatever it costs." Take along a calculator (every new Smartphone has a calculator app, so you always have one with you) and tally up as you go to make sure you stay on budget.

And don't shop when you're hungry. Those items you don't really need look awfully good when your stomach is rumbling for them.

One of the best strategies is to buy what you need when you intend to use it,

not doing a big shop when you have lots of money (on payday, for example) and then hoping what you bought lasts for the next two weeks, because there's bound to be wastage.

Think about this: food is one of the few things on which you spend money, that you are prepared to throw away — not all of it, but some of it — and we don't really think much about it. For example, we cook up gallons of pasta and load up plates and quite often we don't eat everything that's served, with the scraps going into the garbage or the bigger portions set aside as leftovers that don't often get consumed before their fridge life expires.

Meats are often sold by weight, so you're not saving by buying in bulk unless you find a drastically reduced price. But if you don't have the means to freeze meats (preferably individually wrapped, so you can defrost what you need later, rather than defrosting the entire package), don't buy in bulk.

When it comes to fresh items such as produce, buy what you want to consume right away (or within a couple days). There isn't a lot of discount on produce for buying in bulk, and it doesn't store exceptionally well, so you're best to buy it as you use it.

If you want the convenience of having your vegetable of choice to complement a meal, buy frozen vegetables and cook what you need when you need it. Also, look at options in portion sizes. Broccoli crowns, for example, usually allow you to consume everything you buy, whereas broccoli stalks likely result in considerable wastage if you only consume the crowns. Also, mini-cucumbers allow you to use what you want as you go along, rather than cut up half an English Cuke and hoping you can finish the rest before it goes off.

And since many of today's stores match prices, don't drive around to save a couple pennies on a product you want. And use coupons. Coupons are big savers

on items you're going to buy anyway and if you find a deal on something and the coupon applies to all quantities, you could save a bundle on bulk buys. You may also be able to combine price matching with in-store coupons for extra savings.

Finally, be aware that you're going to pay extra for convenience. Think about those single serving coffee makers. You can spend \$6 for a box of cups that will allow you to make 12 cups. However, you can buy a reusable cup for \$3 and fill it up with your favourite ground coffee for about the same price, and enjoy exponentially more cups of coffee for your expenditure.

Finally, remember that nutritious eating is better controlled by you than somebody at a big corporation, which may put in ingredients in their food you may not want in yours. Stay in control of the food you prepare and that will likely also keep you in control of your food budget.

Courtesy: GTA Credit



Tamil Canadian youth Priya Ramesh excels in Ice Dancing

By: Raymond Rajabalan

Priya Ramesh, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Ramesh and Shivajini of Scarborough has been excelling in Ice Dancing in recent times. Priya along with her dancing partner Brandon Labelle has been selected to compete at the national level.

Priya Ramesh & Labelle have been skating together since at least 2011. They won the Canadian pre-novice bronze medal in 2013.

Energetic, friendly and outgoing, Priya's achievements include a Gold Medal in Ice

Dancing at the 2012 Skate Ontario Winter Games, Bronze Medal at the 2013 Canadian Pre Novice, and placing on the Honour Roll. Priya attributes her success to the support of her family and coach for pushing her to her limits, and cites Olympic champion Tessa Virtue as a role model. Priya's goal is to compete in the Olympics on the Canadian national team, and aspires to a career as a pediatrician.

Following is a list of some of their successful performances.



- **2013 Skate Canada Central Ontario Sectionals (Barrie):**
Pre-Novice Dance: Priya Ramesh & Brandon Labelle - 4th
Juvenile Women U14: Priya Ramesh (7th)
- **2012 Canadian Challenge Event: Regina, Saskatchewan**
Pre-Novice Dance: Priya Ramesh & Brandon Labelle (3rd)
- **2012 FSB Oktoberfest (Barrie):**
Pre-Novice Dance: Priya Ramesh & Brandon Labelle (3rd)
- **2012 Ontario Winter Games- (Barrie)**
Juvenile Dance: Priya Ramesh / Brandon Labelle (1st)
- **2012 Skate Canada Central Ontario Sectionals (Milton):**
Juvenile Dance: Priya Ramesh & Brandon Labelle (2nd)

Remembering 21st Anniversary on Jan 20, 2015 Muthuthamby Perairavar Emeritus Principal, Manipay Hindu college, Jaffna, Sri Lanka *People's Principal*

"... As on trade unionism, he had definite ideas on education as well.

He thought far ahead of his time and implemented the new systems then, which are current now.

Double sessions school was too much of a luxury for the dwindling "G.N.P. of Elam. He firmly advocated One session schools for Jaffna and implemented it. M.H.C was the only leading school in Jaffna to do it.

There was a dilemma of quality and quantity. He had large humanism and religious conviction- "That Every human being has the right to discover the purpose of his life through Education-to discover the divinity within him." This prevented him from limiting admission to a particular class or area. Anyone who denies education to another on any ground – even on quality was an obscurantist. He scooped the children of the area with both arms as his and the under privileged will ever remain grateful to him for that.

Introduced commerce courses in the A.L classes for the first time in M.H.C.

Established a Hostel to accommodate the students who flocked in, from all over the Island

The Counsellor concept that has evolved after so many years of changes and studies was in practice then in

M.H.C. It was called "Screening".

The principal, subject teachers, parents and the student, meet to guide the student according to his aptitude and attitude.

School administration for him was neither a witchcraft nor an administrative fiat.

To him, the best teachers cannot be supervised and need not be supervised. Give me a good Principal, I will give you a good school.

He belonged to the people and made the school belong to the people.



2014 Year End Holiday Celebrations by HL Bayview Financial

HL Bayview Financial team celebrated their Christmas and holiday season on Monday, Dec 15th at their Markham office. Picture shows, some of the team members of HL Bayview Financial Inc.





12th Annual Dinner Dance 2014 by Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada - Dec 6, 2014





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Tribute



Sinniah Thurairajah

4 Jan 1932 – 29 Nov 2014

Full script of the speech delivered by the eldest grandson Arun Thurairajah during the funeral service held on Dec 6, 2014

I am Arun Thurairajah, son of Sritharan Thurairajah. Today I would like to share my memories with the one who I can affectionately call my appapa.

While many consider today a day of mourning, I see this as a celebration of life; commemorating the special bond between my grandfather and I. As I reminisce on the wonderful, vivid memories of such a loving person, there was one feature that always stood out to me. A huge joyous smile, one full of pure optimism and glee, a euphoric smile that could never be missed even during the most difficult of scenarios. The sincerity and kindness in his face, could light up every grandchild, able to provide a newfound sense of enthusiasm in a once monotone room.

My earliest memories would be when I was 3 or 4, with my grandfather taking me to a nearby shop (I think it was a Hopper Hut), and coming back with a vaipan in hand. To this day it is one of my favourite foods, and I don't think I will be able to forget this special connection with him. I remember sitting on his lap, appapa holding on to me very tightly. I was barely able to move. He would think that if I moved, I would fall down and hurt myself. Now I understand his tight grip on me. A burning sense of love and protection for his grandchildren, appapa wouldn't even want us to get slightly hurt.

In his later stages of life, my grandfather still managed to remain positive and optimistic. Each time we would go visit him at the nursing home, his familiar, welcoming and affectionate smile would return, eyes lighting up in a child-like joy. While appapa might not

have been able to communicate to his loved ones with words, that friendly and welcoming smile was the only acknowledgement I needed.

I'm grateful that I was able to spend the last few weeks with him, an attempt to give back all the love he showed to me. Appapa may no longer be with us physically; however he will forever remain in our hearts. I feel now that his spirit is at peace. He will always watch over us, our guardian angel, as we pursue future endeavours, guiding us on the right path. I am proud to say that my brothers and I have the immense honour of carrying our last name as Thurairajah.

Ultimately, my grandfather taught me about perseverance, to be strong – willed, to be generous, to help others, and how any problem can be combatted simply with a loving and cheerful smile.

On behalf of our family, we would like to thank and express our gratitude to all who offered their condolences by visiting the funeral home, sending warm – hearted and thoughtful messages, or sending flowers. We also would like to thank all the priests who participated in the funeral and 31st day memorial services, as well as friends and media personals who published the obituary notice. Your kindness and support through this difficult time was greatly appreciated, and will never be forgotten.

- Thurairajah Family



CPARTS: 50 YEARS OF PEACE-BUILDING IN SRI LANKA



Father N.M. Saveri



By Thulasi Muttulingam

The Art Gallery opened by CP Arts in Jaffna

Sixty seven years since Sri Lanka gained her independence from colonial rule, there are many left wondering what has become of their beloved country, and what is yet to become of it. It is a country that inspires despair and worry, yet also pride and hope in its many constitutes. Among those with a Never-Say-Die attitude despite the severe odds they face though, are the artistes at the Thirumarai Kalamannam (known in English as the Centre for Performing Arts), founded in Jaffna. CPArts has the distinction of being the longest running cultural and artistic foundation, working for peace in the country. Its founder, the highly respected Reverend Fr. N.M Saveri (Maria Xavier) of Jaffna was just a young boy when colonial rule ended. In the subsequent years, he was witness to conflicts of various kinds; religious, ethnic and sectarian along caste lines.

As a newly ordained priest from Rome where he had been exposed to a wide spectrum of arts and culture, he decided that the way forward was to engage youths across various divides to come together and break barriers – and the best way to do that would be through art and aesthetics.

“I was born in Ilavalai in 1939 and joined St. Martin’s Seminary in Jaffna at 12, at the wish of my parents, who intended me to be a priest,” says Fr. Saveri. He might not have chosen to join the seminary so young himself he says, but he is glad that his parents made that decision for him, since he found his life’s calling within it.

“The seminary life opened up for me a vista of education I might not have had access to otherwise. In Jaffna, I had the best language teachers teaching me Tamil, English and Latin. Later, I was sent to Kandy where I studied philosophy at the National seminary and also learnt Sinhala. Thereafter I was sent to Rome, where I earned the equivalents of B.A. and M.A. in Theology and was ordained a priest at 23. Even then I had a passion for theatre, art and film. I started wearing glasses at 17 because I was always viewing movies in my spare time.”

When he returned to Sri Lanka as a young priest, his first assignment was at St.Patrick’s College where he started theatre experiments with students. He went to Mannar as assistant parish priest – where he immediately set about gathering youths to enact performances to promote social messages. His first big parish assignment however was a few years later in Urumpirai, Jaffna – and this is where Thirumarai Kalamannam was officially registered, in 1965.

“Thirumarai in Tamil refers to scripture but can be attributed to the scripture of any religion; the purpose behind naming the organization thus was to inculcate the universal religious values of humanity and humanism. All religions preach this at their core and we were seeking to uphold all of them instead of any one religion over the other,” says Fr. Saveri who along with his Masters in Christian Theology is also the holder of double Doctorates – one in History and the other in Hindu Philosophy.



“My primary purpose at that time was to get youths divided by caste sectarianism to come together,” notes the Reverend Father. “It was a success. Youths across all caste lines from the hierarchically highest to the lowest, sat together, ate together and performed together, in our troupes.”

Sometime later the Reverend Father was obliged to move away, first to India where he obtained a Pulavar degree, and then to the UK and Germany to do his M.A. and PhDs. When he returned in 1988, the ethnic conflict was at its height – and the need of the hour was to mend broken bridges between the three main ethnicities. Thus it was that Thirumarai Kalamannam spread its scope outside Jaffna into Central and Southern Sri Lanka as well. It was then that they gained the name Centre for Performing Arts, in English and Ranga Kala Kendraya in Sinhala. They currently have more than 20 Centres all over Sri Lanka, engaging Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim artistes as well as audiences in bridging divides through artistic and cultural ambassadorship.

Sri Lanka during the height of the civil war was not a friendly place for artistes, especially artistes seeking to highlight and redress the common people’s problems. CPArts however managed to not only dodge overt censorship but through their ingenious productions brought out their stories without too many accusations or

counter-accusations of bipartisanship. To those who have seen the depth and ingenuity of their plays, that is an artistic feat within itself - the walking of a tightrope on which accusations of ulterior motives or agendas couldn’t be lightly made.

To Fr. Saveri, this sums up the essence of the Centre’s work- due to which he and his troupes freely moved about not only in the North and South of Sri Lanka during the height of the war – a rare feat for artistic troupes at that time – but abroad as well. Both the LTTE and the Government gave passes to his troupes to move freely within areas of their operational control, where it was difficult for other citizens to travel similarly. In 2002, their performance at the United Nations called the ‘Cradle of War’ earned them the telling tribute: “We find it interesting that you managed to tell your story without blaming anybody.”

These days CPArts not only works to reconcile but to heal. In the words of one of their brochures:

“The Centre has different peace building programs designed for different age groups, addressing the main issues faced under each bracket. For example, they encourage women to use performance as a way of expressing their unique experiences of conflict. With children, they use games and music to get them together with other children from different ethnic and religious origins. The Centre makes use of music, dancing and drama to support people’s expression of conflict, facilitate healing and encourage them to listen to each other. Another approach of theirs is to re-tell historic stories according to the present context. They relate old epics like Ashoka or Ramayana with which all are familiar in Sri Lanka, telling them in a way that brings out the destruction of war and the suffering of people belonging to all races as a result. The Centre promotes human rights and democracy through their practices.”

What they are proudest of having achieved says the Father, is that the Centre’s wide network of dedicated artistes continue to contribute their dedicated services despite straitened funds, due to which they often receive no compensation. It is not a sustainable model but despite that CP Arts has managed to survive for



several years as an ongoing concern. “We are mostly funded through church oriented organizations – but even that does not cover a stipend for the artists who volunteer their time freely. Our main worry for the organization these days is funds for continuity. Our troupes have traveled the world, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, the UK, Canada, USA, Australia... but financially the tours have not been a success. We require sponsorship to make them viable.”

December 03rd 2014 was the CP Arts’ 49th Anniversary. It also happened to be Father Saveri’s 75th birthday. He has been at the Centre’s helm for nearly 50 years now but feels that he is ready to pass on the mantle. Though he does not look his 75 years, he says his years of active service have taken a toll on his health. “I have to take several different tablets a day, everyday; the side effects of the strong medications are taking a toll on my body too. I look forward to being able to pass my responsibilities on to younger, capable shoulders.”

For the moment though, he is still very much at the helm. A solitary figure by the ship he built and launched, scanning the horizons for a worthy mate to take over.





Canadian Tamil Medical Association's 2014 Gala "Lights of Healing"

The Canadian Tamil Medical Association (CTMA) held its annual Gala titled "Lights of Healing" at the Markham Convention Centre on November 30th, 2014. This year's event was to raise funds to support a community wellness centre and mental health rehabilitation centre and to offer humanitarian support for the war affected paraplegic persons in the North and East of Sri Lanka. A special souvenir titled "Nalanthana" was also published to commemorate the event. During the past years, the Association has funded several projects both in Canada and Sri Lanka. Dr. Shan Shanmugavadivel is the Chairperson of the Association.

Seen here are some pictures taken at the Gala event





Obituaries

DR. ARUMUGAM "ROSA" SIVAGANESHANATHAN

Beloved husband of Yogeswary, loving father of Tarini and Lavini, father-in-law of Soruban, uncle of Suhirtha, affectionate brother of Sivagowridevi and Sivanasesavan. He was a physician and Consultant Anaesthesiologist who served in Sri Lanka, U.K., Oman. St. John's, NL, Halifax NS, Charlestown, PE, Regina, Saskatoon, SK, Edmonton, AB and Toronto.

DR. VIGNESWARAN. R.

Retired Consultant Dental Surgeon - Beloved husband of Radha, son of the late Mr & Mrs M. Ramalingam, brother of the late Sarawanabaghavan, Pathmasani, Dr Somaskandan, Dr Puvaneshwari Sivanathan and brother-in-law of the late June, Viji and of Sivanathan

BALASUBRAMANIAM - VAITILINGAM

(Chairman of N. Vaitilingam Group)

Beloved husband of late Radhadevi, loving father of late Dr Mahendra, Vanaja, Shyamala and Surendra, father-in-law of Dr Kumar Mahadevan, Dr Devendra and Uma, affectionate grandfather of Narmadha and Oliver, Dushyanthan and Maryanne, Suanthini and Connor, Anushya, Aparna and Santheep, adored great grandfather of Jessica, James and Cecilia, loving brother of Jegatheeswari Nagendran, Ratneswary Wallooppillai and the late Rasamani, Ponmani, Dr Ramachandra, Sriskandharaja, Mahendraraja, Manimekelai and Vignaraja.

KATHIRIMANIUM URUTHRA THURAIAPPAH

(Rtd. Assistant Manager Singer Industries)

Beloved husband of Krisambal (Rtd. Superintendent of Medical Laboratory Technology NHSL), loving father of Dr. Thenuka Jeyakumar, father-in-law of Samson Jeyakumar, loving grandfather of Akshayan Ashwitha, brother of Sivgandi, Anandalakshmi, the late Krishnathai Vijayalakshmi, Ramakrishna, Jeyalakshmi, brother-in-law of Sivakamasundari, Ganasekaram, Annalakshmi, the late Ganesalingam, Shanmugalingam, Srinivasan (USA) and loving uncle of Rajavijayan and Rajaviji.

VASUDEVA THIRUNAVUKARASU (UK)

Beloved husband of Meenaloshani (UK), loving father of Dharshini (UK), father-in-law of Pratheepan (UK), loving grandfather of Prajin (UK), brother of the late Mahadeva, Vamadeva (UK), late Jayadeva, late Pushpadevi and late Sathyadeva, brother-in-law of late Ambalavanar & Padmashini (UK), Sivakumaran/ Berrel (UK), Vamadevan & Kamalashini (UK), the late Rudrakumaran & Nirmala (UK), Vijekumaran & Menaka (UK), the late Indrakumaran & Punithawathy (UK), the late Sahunthala, the late Rajendra & Manoranchitham.

PULLENAYEGEM - MANONMANIE

(nee AMARASINGHAM)

Relict of the late Christopher Pullenayegem, beloved mother of Chrisantha and Joan, Manoharie and Priann, Amaranie and Sriyantha, loving Nana of Anoushka, Sonja, Jaaron, Tashya and Senesh, great grandmother of Luke and Amelia. Sister of Sironmanie, V.R. Amarasingham, the late Kumarasamy, the late Muthamma, the late Rani, the late Pathma.

SHANMUGAVADIVEL - JANAKI

Wife of the late Mr Shanmugavadivel (Raju), sister of the late Mr Sugumaran, mother of the late Chandraleka Dharmarasa, Radha, Rani Jeyaramachandran, Padmini Balakrishnan, Ramani, Indrarajan, Shanthi (Lali), the late Chitra Dheenadayalan, Nirupa Kulendran, grandmother of Umesh, Sharmila, Wignesh, Mugundan, Prasanna, Thulasi, Abhiram, Abhiramee, Lavanya, Lokesh, Kirthika, great-grandmother of Aravind, Poorva and Bishman.

YOGARAJ - ASHVINI JUDITH

student Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya. Beloved daughter of Yogaraj Jayarajan & Dilki Yogaraj, beloved grand-daughter of Rtd. Senior Superintendent of Police Jayarajan & Mrs Pushpamalar Jayarajan and the late A.J. Nagalingham & Mrs Shanthi Nagalingham, beloved niece of Mano & Rochelle Jayarajan, Kiritharan & Meenakumari (UK), Gerard & Shehana Nagalingham (Canada), loving cousin of Akesh, Lakshi (UK), Abinesh & Sarah (Canada).

BALASUBRAMANIAM - KANDIAH

Much loved son of late Mr & Mrs. Kandiah, beloved husband of Gnanamary son-in-law of late Mr & Mrs. Chellathurai brother of late Mr Rajathurai, late Mr. Ariyaratnam, late Mr Ratnasingham, loving father of Vhanmathy, Balendra, Vignendra, Srimathy loving father-in-law of Sivapathasuntharam, Thayanythy, Bavani, Sivarithikan, loving grandfather of Adhithan, Parthiban, Rumesh, Nilanthy, Anojan, Geventh, Shambave, Mathusha, Khavishan, great grandfather of Kylesh, Sanchay, Sasheni.

THEVAMANOSUTHAN - THEVASAKAYAM (SUTHAN)

Ex-Unilivers. Loving son of the late Mr & Mrs Jacob Thevasakayam of Earllalai North, beloved husband of Thayahari, loving father of Shobai & Heshman, loving brother of Manohari Sathiaratnam, Thevamanoharan (Mano) and Thevamanorathan (Rathan), brother-in-law of the late William Sathiaratnam and Sarojini, Vasanthi, Ravi Mann, Manohari Tharmakulendran & Mahendra Mann, son-in-law of the late Mr & Mrs R.A. Mann of Uduvil

SACHCHIDANANDAN - S.

(founder United General Motors)

Beloved husband of Maheswary Devi loving father of Ratheesh Kanth, Krishanth, Krishnanath, Gayathry, Karthi and Kaushick, father-in-law of Kumari, Dinesh & Karthik, much loved grandfather of Naksshat & Dipishida.

SINNETAMBY - NIRANJAN

(Attorney-at-Law)

Beloved husband of Sarojini and the late Carmini, father of Revantha, Darvan and Pratah, son of the late Justice Nadarajah Sinnetamby and Lalitha Sinnetamby, brother of the late Vasanta, Aswini and of Iranee, father-in-law of Aruni, Lanthe and Rachel, adored grandfather of Shalini, Tariq, Tremayne and Shehan.



Miss.
Kumareswary
Gnanasubramaniam
(Baba)

Ms Kumareswary Gnanasubramaniam (Baba), formerly of Araly North, Vaddukoattai, and thereafter lived at 50 Tuxedo Court, Scarborough, ON Canada., passed away on Friday, Dec. 20, 2014 at her residence.

She was the youngest daughter of late Gnanasubramaniam and late Rasamani of Araly North.

Loving sister of late Mahendran, Buwanendran (Toronto), late Jegatheeswary, Nageswary (Toronto) and late Yuhendran.

Sister-in-law of Paba Mahendran (Australia), late Mangayarkarasi Buwanendran, Vivekanandan (U.K), late Sribaleswaran and Kamalamanohari Yuhendran (Toronto).

She was an old girl of Jaffna College and former staff (Miss Maniam) at Chundikuli Girls' School, Jaffna.

Her siblings and close family members would like to thank all those who attended the visitation and funeral ceremony on Dec 26th and 27th 2014.

Obituary Notices in Monsoon Journal

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online readership worldwide.

For details, contact: 416 358 3235 or
e-mail: toronto@monsoonjournal.com



Tribute

Community Watch



Ponniah Kanagasabapathy:

(1935-2014) *A Principal with principles*

The sudden demise of late Mr. Kanagasabapathy, fondly called "Kanex" and also affectionately known as Athipar (Principal) is an irreparable loss for the Toronto's Tamil Community in particular and for the thousands of his colleagues and former students across the globe in general.

A teacher par excellence and a strict disciplinarian, Kanex was born in the village of Sandilipay in North Sri Lanka on Sep 04, 1935. Together with his two brothers and two sisters he grew up under the careful guidance of his parents Ponniah and Achimuthu. He started his early education at Skandavarothaya College where he was attracted by the simplicity, discipline and administrative ability of its Principal orator Subramaniam. In fact he adopted and applied these sterling qualities that helped him to become a successful teacher as well as a respected Principal in the later years.

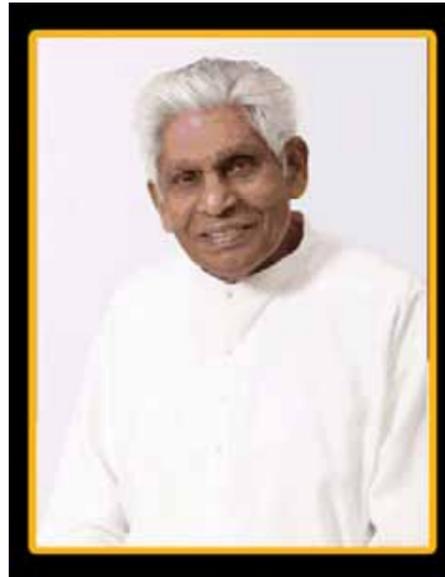
After his Grade 12 Exam, he proceeded to Tami Nadu where he fol-

lowed his higher education at Madras Christian College, graduating with Zoology Honours, obtaining a Gold medal for his brilliant performance.

Mr. Kanex once said that during his university days in Chennai, he was attracted by the fiery speeches of leaders of DMK as well as Communist party and those speeches helped to improve his knowledge about regional politics.

After graduation he joined Mahajana College, Tellippalai and after a few years he was transferred to Putur Somaskanda College. In both educational institution he made his mark and was instrumental for many of his students obtain excellent grades in Zoology, opening the way for them to enter the Faculty of Medicine.

When he was serving at Mahajana College, there was system in place that any student seeking admission to GCE Advanced Level had to obtain a letter of authorization from the Department of Education. One day a student who had no contacts at the Department ap-



proached the principal and explained to him that he does not know anyone in the department and asked him for his help. When Kanex told him that he cannot do anything against the existing rules, the student had told him "Sir, if you are unable to help me, I have no alternative but to go to Kilinochchi to continue our family trade. Hesitating for a moment Kanex told the student "I am admitting you right now even if I lose my job".

During his days at Puttur Somaskanda College once he had to face the opposition of local villagers since he had provided admission to a student from an oppressed community. However Kanex not only stood firm in his decision but also arranged two teachers from the community to be appointed to the same school. The opposition from the villagers soon fizzled out and everything soon returned to normalcy.

These are just two incidents to indicate that he was a man of action.

After obtaining Diploma in Education at the University of Peradeniya he served in the North for a very brief period and then was selected by the Civil Service Commission of Nigeria in 1981 to serve in Sokoto State. Though selected to serve as a Science teacher, the authorities there soon spotted his talents and he was promoted to serve in the Ministry of Agriculture. During his five years of service there he developed a curriculum for teaching of Agriculture and in addition he developed a set of question and answers to be used in the school for the next ten years.

He was a nature lover who spent most of his free time planting various floral trees around his garden in the small town in Northern Nigeria and since I too was serving in the same state I had often seen local neighbours watching the multicoloured trees with awe and amazement.

He arrived in Canada in 1987 and

after residing in Montreal for a brief period he moved to Toronto where he began to live in Lansdowne Co-op housing scheme where he helped to establish a large library.

Meanwhile, unfortunately when he was about to settle down and mould the future of his children he had to face a tragedy when his beloved wife Amirthagowri passed away after a brief period of illness. It was a heavy blow to him but yet he was determined to face any obstacles. He was soon able to find employment as a Multicultural Educational Advisor in Toronto Board of Education. In addition to doing various part time jobs, he spent his spare time getting involved in horticulture and floriculture.

Just as he was trying to stabilize himself, he had to face the death of his son Manimaran a few years later. Facing the double tragedy with remarkable strength he began to get himself involved in social activities for many years, while often feeling the effects of age related illness.

He spent many hours honing his writing skills and soon started writing articles on a variety of subjects especially cricket. He soon spread his wings wider and began writing a number of books. Out of his publications, his book about the services of 23 principals who had served in various educational institutions in Sri Lanka was greatly appreciated by a number of Tamil readers around the globe.

A prolific writer he had published two books and hundreds of articles in every newspaper published in Toronto. Being an eloquent speaker he was present in almost every literary function. Though in recent years he had to face the effect of many serious health problems, he continued his literary and social activities until he was finally called to rest on Christmas Eve.

He is survived by his son Manivanan and two daughters Manimozhli and Manivili.

May His soul rest in peace.

***Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time
Let us then, be up and doing
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait
- (H. W. Longfellow-1809-1882)***

**A Tribute by:
Raymond Rajabalan**



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Karuna-Nilayam-Centre for Kindness: Diamond Jubilee



Karuna-Nilayam was a project started by the Jaffna Church Missionary Society in 1965 and it will celebrate its Diamond Jubilee in 2015. It was established by Muriel Violet Hutchins, an Anglican Missionary in the 29th of October 1965 in the interests of orphaned girls and women. It has served as a refuge for disaster stricken women over the years. Muriel came as a missionary and taught as a teacher at Chundikuli Girls' college and then moved to Kopay Christian College to serve as its vice-principal. She retired in 1955 and took on the Karuna Nilayam Project of the JCMA. She originally started with a small cottage and then with funds collected from well-wishers in home and abroad, built a hostel for destitute women. A church was built beside it on a Dravidian style with a 'Kopuram' over the sanctuary. When Ms. Hutchins reached the age of 80 in 1979, the JCMA took over the administration of the center. Popularly known as 'vellai-kkara amma'/Hutchkins ammashe was proved herself to be a greatest ambassador for Christ among the poor and the destitute women in Killinochchi area. She wore the simple dress the orphans and at Karuna-Nilayam wore and she ate the food they ate. She died at the age of 97 and her mortal remains became one with Vanni where she lived.

Karuna-Nilayam still thrives as a living testimony for the services rendered by this victorious champion for Christ. The war broke out after her demise and 'karuna-nilayam' had to be shifted to Jeyanthipuram. Now it is proudly re-built and continues the task initiated by Hutchkins Ammah.

Karuna-Nilayam still continues with the following services to the orphaned and destitute women:

(1) Looks after women who are mentally affected. Nutritional food and medical facilities are provided for these hapless women. A medical officer from the Killinochchi hospital visits them monthly and examines their conditions in order to grant them continual treatment through their medical clinic.

(2) Providing Support for poverty stricken girl students: 36 students are provided board and lodging at the KN centre and 16 other students are maintained at Chundikuli Girls College. Between 2006 and 2013, 25 students among them were able to gain

admission to the university.

(3) Pre-School Education:

About 67 children including boys and girls are studying at Muriel Pre-school education centre at Karuna Nilayam. Four teachers and one cook are serving at this centre.

(4) Computer Training Unit.

The computer training program has been initiated to help poor children who have to leave school early to seek employment. An experienced and well trained teacher has been employed to teach these children. Not only school leavers but also children staying in our home are provided with the training.

(5) Rearing of Cows:

Five cows are reared at our center. Milk is provided for the children at our center, for mentally handicapped women and pre-school children. We have employed a supervisor to look after the cows and grow grass for the maintenance of the cows.

(6) Cultivation of Grapes:

A grape farm is established at Karuna-Nilayam. Grape-juice is prepared from the matured grapes produced at this farm. The juice is bottled and sold at reasonable price to various churches.

(7) Medical Center:

The Medical Center at Karuna Nilayam was established in 2011 with the help of Hope Outreach, U.K. The medical clinic is managed with the services of a nurse. A doctor visits the clinic once a month to examine the health conditions of mentally stressed women and children at the center.

(8) Mental Health Services:

Mental health services are provided for mentally handicapped women and pre-school children.

Fifteen persons are employed to provide services at Karuna-Nilayam.

Friends of the Karuna Nilayam have grouped themselves to form a charitable organization in Toronto. The Diamond Jubilee of the K.N will be celebrated in October 2015. All well wishers of the Karuna Nilayam, past pupils of Kopay Christian College and friends from Killinochchi are requested to contact Mrs. Jeeva Ratnarajah (416-722-5338/jratnarajah@yahoo.ca) or Mr. M.C. Francis (marcilfrancis@gmail.com) or Leela Emerson-416-494-7562 for further details. Donations may be sent to: T.D Bank Branch: 3841, A/C No.5230218.

Institution of academic and fine arts of Durham children and parents present the Holiday Cheer Tour

Children from the Institution of Academic and Fine Arts of Durham performed at various places in the Durham Community this holiday season as part of their "Annual Holiday Cheer" Tour. Some of the places include Pickering, Lakeridge Health, R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Center and Rouge Valley Ajax Pickering Hospital.

These children are honored and happy to perform at these places to make everyone cheered up for the holiday season as this is a special time of the year, a time of giving, a time

of sharing. The performances included singing and instrumental.

Lesley Bovie from the Lakeridge Health Hospital said "It was definitely the highlight of our holidays this year. Everyone was so fantastic -- and very well-behaved!"

The singing was beautiful and it made many of our patients smile today". We will continue the choir tour throughout the year hoping to bring smiles on many people. Thanks to all the parents and children for their time and participation.



Cancer patients watching the show



Singing at Ajax-Pickering Hospital



Group shot with the cancer center physicians



Children singing in Pickering

Canadian Tamil Professionals Association Annual Gala 2014

The Canadian Tamil Professionals Association (CTPA) presented its annual gala, the Black & White Affair, on Saturday, December 27th, 2014. It was an exciting night of networking with professionals, awesome dance performances and entertainment, and

a dinner buffet.

All proceeds from the event will be used to fund and subsidize CTPA workshops and events for the 2015 calendar year. Seen here are some pictures taken at the event

(Picture Courtesy: Tamil Mirror)





Kayts St Anthony's Alumni Reunion Dinner

Past students of Kayts St Antony's college had a gala get together in Scarborough on Saturday, Dec 6th at JC's Banquet hall and Grill House and it was a feast of nostalgia where former students and teachers mingled freely sharing pleasant memories of their school days.

Ably organized by MacMillan Mariathas, the president of Alumni association of Canada (SACCAN) and an energetic youthful committee, the function was a great success and it included

many cultural events that were a feast to the eyes.

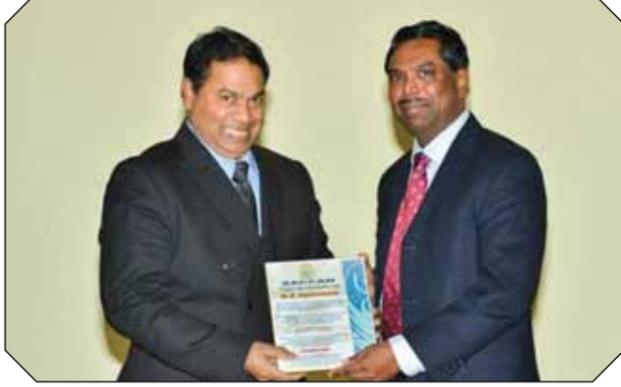
All past teachers residing in Canada were honoured at the occasion and special commemorative plaques were handed over to each of them. Mr.Rajabalan , a former student who had taught at his Alma Mater speaking at the occasion mentioned that during his period of serving his old school he was very happy to have been involved in modernizing the science laboratory. He also mentioned that it was a great

pleasure to honour the three senior teachers Messrs. Joseph, Ferdinand and Ambalavanathan present at the occasion and explained in detail how they toiled hard to produce excellent results at the public examinations.

Prof. Rev. Fr.Joseph Chandrakathan of University of Toronto speaking at the occasion said that he was very pleased to note the progress being made by the college and mentioned that his father had taught at the college for a brief period .He pointed out that Kay-

ts St. Anthony's College continues to function as a great catholic educational institution in North Sri Lanka.

At the end of a sumptuous buffet dinner, the President of the Association thanked the guests and said that the present committee will continue to work hard to help the Alma Mater and pointed out that the proceeds from this event will be used to help the underprivileged students.





MILESTONES OF DTA - 2014

DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION CELEBRATED 14TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

East Shore Community Centre in Pickering was filled with candy canes and cake, jingle bells and carols on Saturday, 20th December to mark Durham Tamil Association's 14th Annual Christmas Party. Over 86 kids registered and took part in various fun filled activities including crafts, coloring and games. Face painting artist Nicole made all the kids happy with her designs, while balloon artist Jonathan gave away balloon animals to all the children who attended the event. Talented youth of DTA Jeremy Francis organized the Christmas Carols with over 30 children of various age. Also, the youth organized live musical show to entertain the guests. DTA Youth Sarika, Tharmela and Mayuran presented Tamil hit numbers along with many leading singers of Tamil community.

Over 40 youth of DTA surprised all the guests by taking the leadership for the first time in organizing the event from

scratch. They decorated the venue, handled the sound system, served pizza and snacks to everyone in an orderly manner, wrapped around 90 gifts, took turns as mascots, organized games and crafts for children throughout the evening and even cleaned up the venue.

Three hours of this magical event came to an end when Santa arrived from North Pole and gave away gifts to the children, with the help of the Elves of TEAM DTA Youth.



DDSB's Director of Education Mr. Martyn Beckett releasing DDSB's official poster of Tamil Heritage Month to MP Corneliu Chisu and Deputy Mayor of Pickering Doug Dickerson during DTA's 2014 Thai Pongal Vizha - Copy



DTA's Thai Pongal Display in Ajax Library



DTA's Thai Pongal Display in Pickering Library



DTA's Thai Pongal Display in Ajax Community Center



DDSB's official poster proclaiming January as Tamil Heritage Month was released to dignitaries by President of DTA Josh Suresh @ DTA's Thai Pongal Festival 2014



DTA's 2014 Thai Pongal Display in Whitby Library



TEAM DTA Youth



Children enjoying face painting



Craft Table



Jonathan making Balloon Animals



Kids enjoying Face Painting



Santa with Mascots



Carols Group of DTA



Children of DTA during the beginning of the X'Mas Party



DTA Youth planning for the X'Mas Party



DTA Youth wrapping Gifts



Some of the super moms of DTA



Tamil Heritage Month Cultural Festival

Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham will be celebrating the Tamil Heritage Month

At the Pickering Town Centre, on 18th of January 2015, Sunday.

The purpose of Tamil Heritage Month Cultural Festival is to educate not only the Tamil population, but the general public, children and youth about our native geographic location, societal values, religion, culture, and tradition. By hosting this event and inviting the Tamils living throughout the Durham Region, members of parliament from all cities, councillors, mayors, and their staff to this event, we hope to further educate the citizens of Durham on our beautiful Tamil heritage.

This is an excellent opportunity for

the Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham to promote their organization, mingle with Tamil citizens new to the area, connect and network with other Tamil Associations and businesses, and create a mutual understanding, respect and beneficial relationship with the above mentioned groups.

It is our hope to create an opportunity for Durham Tamils to come together and celebrate the Tamil culture with the people of Durham. We, who resides in Durham must bear in mind that these initiatives are aimed at promoting cultural understanding in our society is essential for the region.

Tamils have a great tradition of heritage and culture that developed over 2,000 years ago and still continues to

flourish today. We must bring our beautiful history into the limelight and continue to promote and preserve the Tamil heritage.

This year Tamil Heritage Month Theme is:

Raja Raja the Great, is one of the greatest Emperors of India, who ruled between 985 and 1014 CE.

It was during his reign that the Chola Dynasty started to emerge as a great Empire.[5] By conquering several kingdoms in India, he expanded the Chola Empire as far as Sri Lanka in the south, and Kalinga (Odisha) in the northeast.

Raja Raja Chola was one of the greatest sovereigns of South India, a valiant conqueror and empire builder, an able administrator, a patron of arts and let-

ters and a great builder.

During the first decade of the eleventh century, the Chola king Raja Raja Chola I (985-1014) constructed the Brihadeeswarar Temple at Thanjavur. The temple is considered to be one of the best specimens of South Indian temple architecture.

The best and unique part of the Thanjavur temple is the Nandi (Bull) which was built by Raja Raja Cholan I King in 1010 AD. This temple was more than 1000 years old. Nandi is meant to be the Vahanam (Transport) assistance of Lord Shiva (God). This Nandi (Bull) is carved out of a single rock, at the entrance measuring about 16 feet long and 13 feet high. It is located at Thanjavur, Tamilnadu, India.

Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham

TCASD Believe in Great Team Work

Youth and Children at 2014 Christmas Gathering

Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham

Cavina Vairamuthu, TCASD youth who addressed the Proclamation Presentation on 15th of Dec 2014 at the City of Pickering Chamber

Tamil Heritage Month January 2015 Proclamation from the City of Pickering

Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham

We cordially invite you to celebrate together

Tamil Heritage Month January 2015

At Pickering Town Centre
On Sunday, January 18th, 2015
11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

For more information
Email: info@tamilsocietydurham.com

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Proclamation from Town of Ajax
Tamil Heritage Month January 2015



AJAX LIBRARY UNITY IN DIVERSITY EVENT



Joel Sutherland, Library staff lead for Teen Advisory Council (TAC) Top row, TAC members: Michael Campbell, Brian Campbell, Vice President. Arika Chowdbury, Faith Clark, and Ann Makka, Secretary.



Suriyakala Jeevanandan, Indian dance instructor, Institution of Academic and Fine Arts Durham.



Left to right: Karishama Panday Chitram, speaker, Sankat Mochan Hanuman Mandir. Aakriti Pandey, singer, and TAC member.



Esther Enyolu, Executive Director, Women's Multicultural Resource Counselling Centre of Durham Region.



Left to right: guests, performers and speakers attending the Ajax Library, "Unity in Diversity" event. Cecil Ramnauth, Emily Rutland, Mike Nooreini, Ziba Moslehi, Esther Enyolu, Farahdouht Eshraghi, Renrick Ashby, Debra Tiwari.



Yalda Baghaei and Abteen Mosleih, speakers.

PICKEING HIGH SCHOOL, HUMAN RIGHTS ASSEMBLY

Back row standing, members of the PHS Human Rights Assembly organizing committee.

Seated, left to right, Assembly guest speaker: Raveena Rajasingham, Director, Community Development Council Durham. Naki Osutei, Lead, Diversity and Inclusion Toronto 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games Organizing Committee. Esther Enyolu, Executive Director, Women's Multicultural Resource Counselling Centre of Durham. Chis Alexander, MP Ajax Pickering, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Speakers are holding "Pachi the Porcupine," the official mascot for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, that was designed by four girls attending Buttonville Public School in Markham. At the Assembly, PHS students and administrators, in the name of guest speakers, donated \$250 to Games organizers.



PHS Human Rights Assembly organizers, with Chris Alexander, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

PHS PEACE AND COMMUNITY HARMONY CONCERT



Angela Ananthacumaran, singer.



Josua Lucas, and Jordan Myers, "Steel and Rhythm" musicians.



Byra Dineshkumar, singer.



Baha'i Ladies Singing Group. Saghar Baghei, Hengameh Shams, Ziba Moslehi.



Dancers for the Institution of Academic and Fine Arts Durham Region.



The Baha'i Children's Singing Group.



Cecil Ramnauth, Town of Ajax, Host Committee member, Pan Am Games, Dinesh Kumar, Director, Rouge Valley Health System Foundation, Tom Thiru, President, Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham.

DELEGATION PRESENTATION TO AJAX TOWN COUNCIL



Yalda Baghaei and Cedric Thakurdin, delegation presentation to Ajax Town Council, holding certificates of appreciation, from the provincial government.

On behalf of the Ontario Liberal Caucus
Best wishes for Tamil Heritage Month and happy Thai Pongal



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Etobicoke Centre
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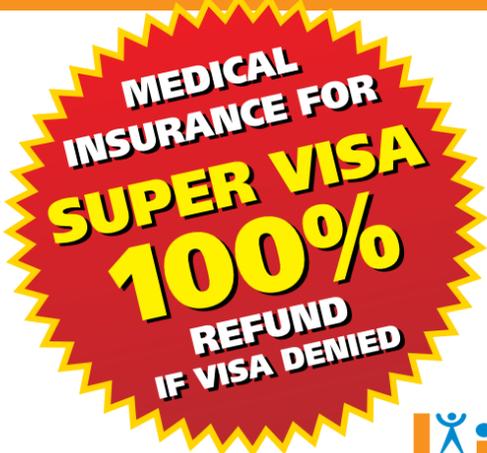
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Christmas is about family, not only presents



It was the night before Christmas and the rain was as gentle as snow. It's time to go to bed our parents called. I decided to sleep for a minute or so. Then I decided to watch the wind blow. But when I went downstairs and took a look, I realized something was off the hook. This was something surprising because I looked like I was dying. The presents weren't there where they used to be so I thought they disappeared from what I see. I quickly told my mom and dad and they told me they weren't mad or sad.

I didn't know that they wouldn't cry so I went to my room to figure out why. I figured out a reason that was so big and strong and I realized I couldn't be at all wrong. Without our parents we wouldn't have gifts or a lift. We wouldn't have schools or drools. We wouldn't have joy and we wouldn't have a toy. We wouldn't have a bun or fun. Life without our parents would be really boring so next time you do something make sure it's really adoring!!

- by Radha Pandya
(4th grade at Arbor Intermediate School, Piscataway NJ, USA)



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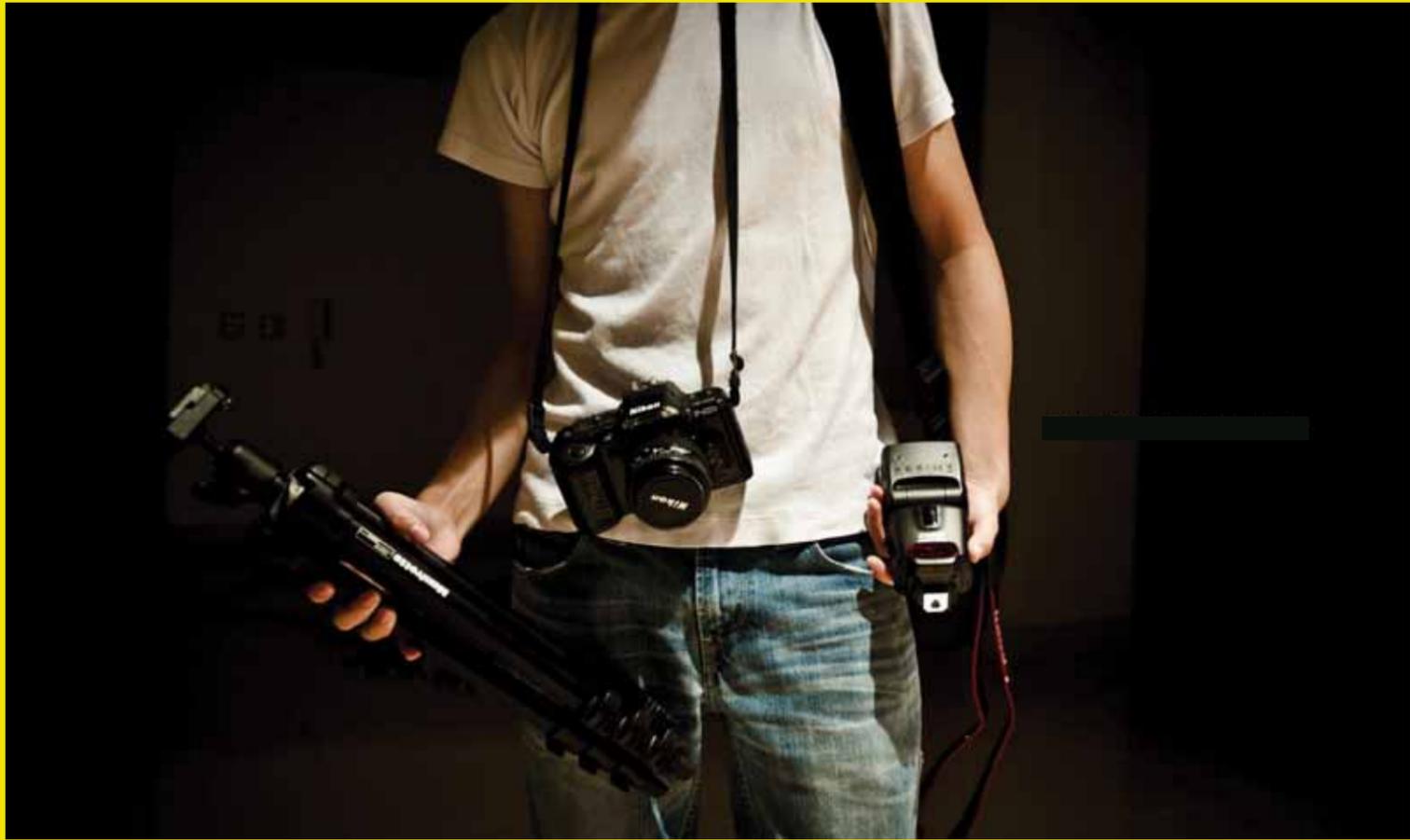
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& a Bright Prosperous 2015

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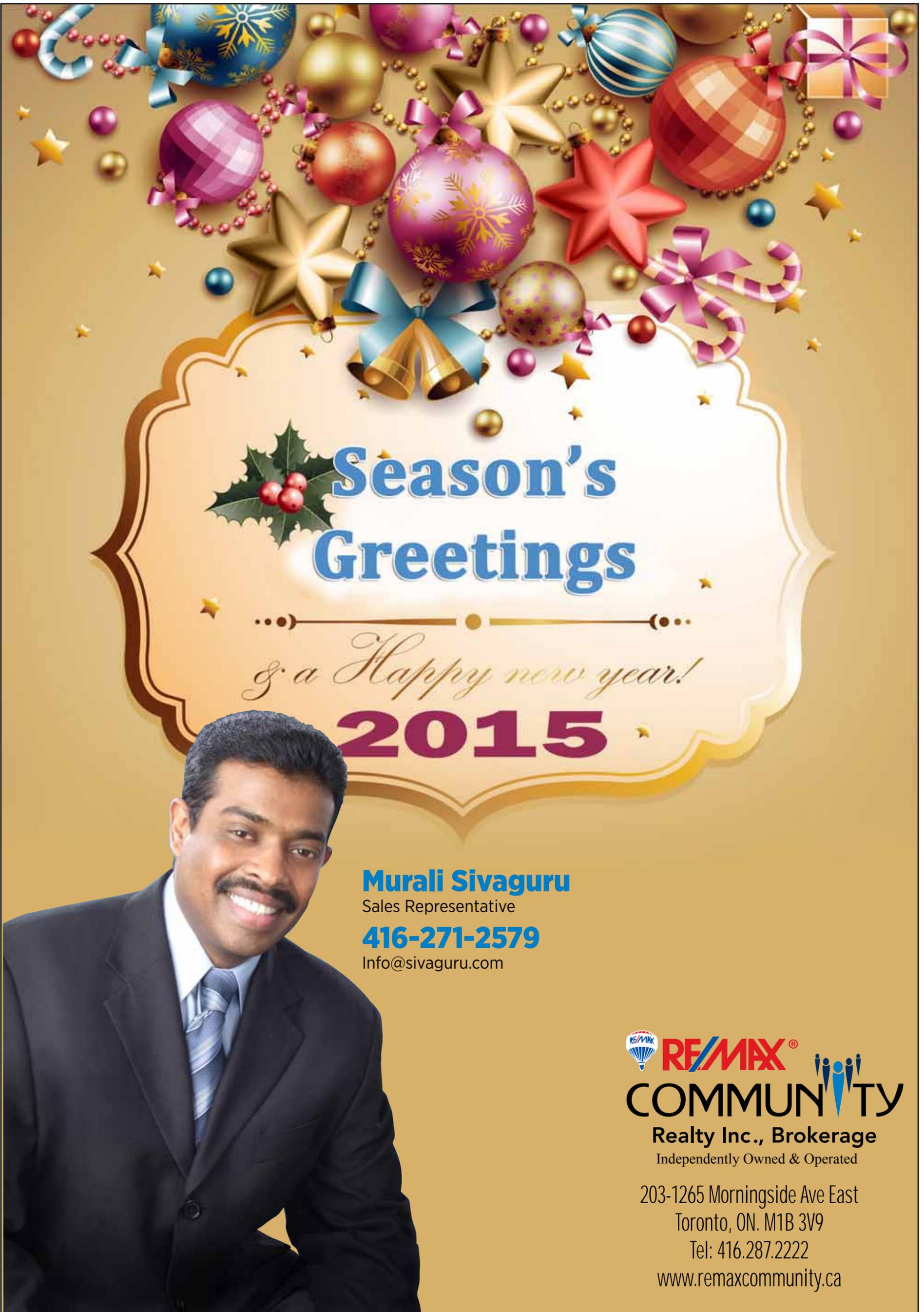


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**Season's
Greetings**

& a Happy new year!

2015

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Community Watch



Durham Tamil Association



DTA performing @ Pickering Heritage Day



TEAM DTA with dignitaries during the City of Pickering's Heritage Day Event - 22 Feb 2014



Uma Suresh, Tracey Vaughan, Oliver Forbes, Sophia Bittar, Cordelia McIntosh, Esther Enyolu, Councillor Lorne Coe & MPP Joe Dickson @ One Billion Rising



Uma Suresh- Board Director with dignitaries & Esther Enyolu - Executive Director of WMRC @ Black History Month Event



How-To In 10 Festival - Oshawa



How-To In 10 Festival - Pickering



How-To In 10 Festival - Whitby



TEAM DTA with Sarah White of Scugog Library



DTA's Archana, Ashley & Abishna decorating applying Henna for young guests in Scugog Library



DTA's Sumi tying saree for a guest



TEAM DTA with the organisers of IWD



TEAM DTA Youth raised \$ 3606.85 for Canadian Cancer Society



TEAM DTA giving the big cheque for \$ 3606.85 to Canadian Cancer Society



TEAM DTA with MP Corneliu Chisu during Easter Parade



DTA's Uma Suresh as a Steering Committee Member during Media Launch of the Conference on Family Violence Against South Asian Women - April 2014



DTA's Neraja, Uma Suresh & Abishna with organisers Angela & Roxanne of Hearts Of Durham



TEAM DTA during Durham Caribbean Festival



DTA's Arabi, Nithi & Anisan helping out with the crafts during Customer Appreciation @ Pickering Village Icecream Shoppe



TEAM DTA with Ajax Councillor Joanne Dies & Organizer Patti O' Connor @ JAM Festival



DTA's Jesihan, Saranya & Nityasri helping kids with Bouncing Castle



TEAM DTA with MPP Joe Dickson during Ajax Home Week Parade



TEAM DTA Youth helping Relay For Life



DTA's Kulakshana performing @ Indian Independence Day



Dignitaries during Flag Hoisting



TEAM DTA @ The Peace & Harmony Concert



Henna Artists of TEAM DTA Youth with Don Terry Don Terry during 1 Year Countdown of Pan Am Games



TEAM DTA with Dignitaries at Durham Tamil Association's 14th Annual BBQ & Family Picnic



DTA TEAM Youth @ Minister Chris Alexander's Youth Forum



TEAM DTA with Mayor of Pickering Dave Ryan, Councillor David Pickles & Keith Falconer



TEAM DTA Youth Girls applying Henna for guests in our booth during Canada Day in Ajax



Young kids of DTA performing Bharathanatyam during Canada Day in Pickering



DRPS Sergeant Emmanuel Itheme with TEAM DTA Youth with TEAM DTA during Youth in Policing



TEAM DTA Youth with Sonia Bhatia during Yogapalooza



DTA Volunteers with Celebrate Yourself organisers of UOIT



DTA's Jeremy & Joshua presenting Chaos Theory at Black History Month



DTA's Salangayin Sangamam performing @Whitby's World Fest



TEAM DTA Youth with Whitby Mayor Pat Perkins during World Fest



DTA's Uma Suresh with other community leaders during IDI's Public Heroes Award Ceremony Dinner



Hon. Chris Alexander, Canada's Citizenship & Immigration Minister appreciating the youth of Durham Tamil Association with his scrolls, for their outstanding volunteerism



Durham Tamil Association's Proud Moment during 2014 Youth Festival



Parent Volunteers recognized by MPP Joe Dickson



VP of DTA Mr. Kanga Sivanathan & DTA being recognized by MPP Tracy MacCharles for the service to the community - Jan 2014



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Schedule includes weekends. Must have reliable vehicle, to travel and attend events at various locations.



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Warning! Fake client trying to lure agents to properties

Industry leaders are cautioning agents working Toronto's west end, warning them about a seemingly ideal client intent on luring them to vacant properties.

In Etobicoke, this individual is posing as a buyer and is targeting female agents, aiming to find them alone at a vacant property. The Toronto Real Estate Board released a member alert via its intranet, detailing the attempts made on at least five women in a single office.

The individual claims to be a doctor relocating from British Columbia, and is looking for an \$800,000 home for his wife – a fellow doctor – and their two children.

The deception is a reminder of the tragic kidnapping and murder of a real estate agent in Arkansas. The man arrested for the crime said he targeted the agent "because she was just a woman that worked alone, a rich broker."

News of the scam came to light when one female agent told her colleague that she received the same request from a similar buyer. That interaction, she said, turned sour and the buyer began harassing her with phone calls and rude text messages.

The agents looked further into the individual's story, and found that no

hospitals – whether downtown or in Etobicoke – were planning to hire a doctor by the name the individual provided.

The individual contacted at least four other female agents in that office, though TREB was unable to disclose which Toronto office that is.

One of those agents agreed to meet the individual, but smartly brought her husband. While waiting outside the property, she noted a silver Acura slow down, make a U-turn, then speed away. The individual later made an excuse for not showing up.

TREB said each agent was contacted directly on her mobile phone, not through the real estate office. The properties that the individual requested to see were each vacant.

Agents, and especially those in Etobicoke, are reminded to enact safe practices while showing properties.

Few safety tips are given below.

1 – Bring a buddy

When asked why the agent was targeted, the alleged killer said: "Because she was just a woman that worked alone..." Having another agent with you will automatically reduce your chances of becoming a victim. Plus, that second agent can help you show the property to more than one prospec-



tive buyer at a time, essentially doubling your efficiency.

2 – Follow, don't lead

Never walk ahead of potential buyers, since this presents the evil-intentioned with the opportunity to overpower you. Instead, direct the potential buyer when showing the property. Say, "The kitchen is to your left," and enter the space after them. This also provides the potential buyer with the opportunity to take in the space as clearly as possible.

3 – Check in

If you'll be showing the home alone, be sure to tell someone you trust the address of the property and check in with that person every half hour or so. If you miss a check in, that person will

know to attempt to contact you.

4 – Escape routes

Search the property for escape routes. If you find yourself in a disturbing situation, can you leave the house through the back door? Is there a side entrance through which you can escape? During your search for and mental note of escape routes, you can also perfect your knowledge of the home's details.

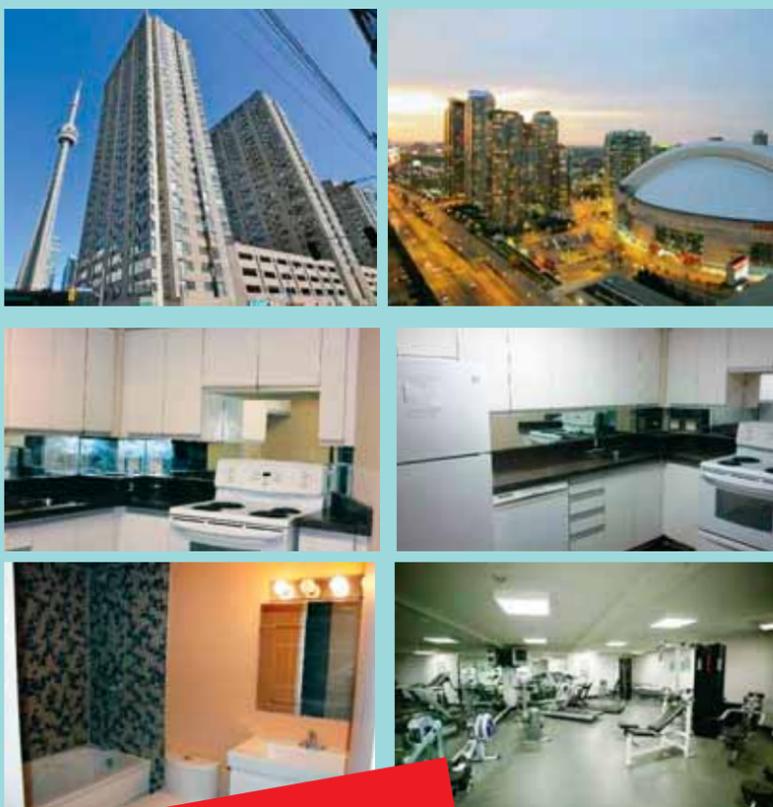
5 – Open curtains and windows

In addition to adding to the home's natural light and fresh ambiance, opening the curtains and windows allows passersby to look in and detect any trouble.

Courtesy: Real Estate Professional – Nov 2014

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Building View



Building Front View



Board Room



Executive Office



Waiting Area



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Kitchen



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Building View



Building Front View



Board Room



Executive Office



Waiting Area



Dental Chair



Lobby

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Kitchen



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On behalf of the Ontario Liberal Caucus
Best wishes for Tamil Heritage Month and happy Thai Pongal



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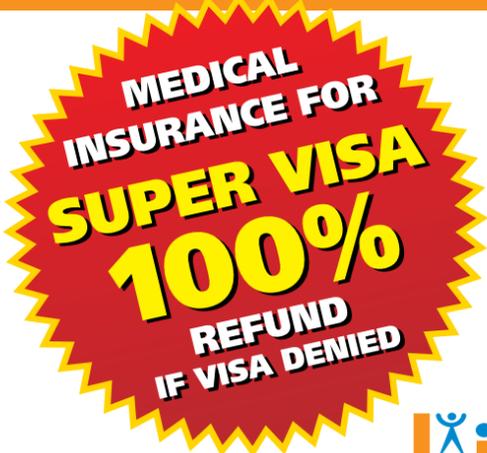
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Christmas is about family, not only presents



It was the night before Christmas and the rain was as gentle as snow. It's time to go to bed our parents called. I decided to sleep for a minute or so. Then I decided to watch the wind blow. But when I went downstairs and took a look, I realized something was off the hook. This was something surprising because I looked like I was dying. The presents weren't there where they used to be so I thought they disappeared from what I see. I quickly told my mom and dad and they told me they weren't mad or sad.

I didn't know that they wouldn't cry so I went to my room to figure out why. I figured out a reason that was so big and strong and I realized I couldn't be at all wrong. Without our parents we wouldn't have gifts or a lift. We wouldn't have schools or drools. We wouldn't have joy and we wouldn't have a toy. We wouldn't have a bun or fun. Life without our parents would be really boring so next time you do something make sure it's really adoring!!

- by Radha Pandya

(4th grade at Arbor Intermediate School, Piscataway NJ, USA)



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