

A *parfait media publication*

Monsoon Journal

VOL 10 ISSUE 2 JULY 2015

“Tamil Canadians need not fear about recent changes in Citizenship laws”, says Minister Chris Alexander in an interview with “Monsoon Journal”

By Siva Sivapragasam

Canada’s Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander refuted claims made by certain recent news items that Tamil Canadians run the risk of losing their citizenship rights due to certain changes in citizenship laws. He termed these news items as “malicious propaganda” aimed at misleading the people.

In an almost hour-long interview with “Monsoon Journal” Minister Alexander explained that the changes have been introduced to make citizenship yet stronger and help expedite the process of obtaining citizenship to permanent residents. He stated that there would be no different classes in the category of citizens and that there would be no distinction between naturalized citizens and new citizens.

Explaining further about the process of deportation, he stated that only dual citizens convicted of acts of terror-

“We do not anticipate, and we do not want, that any individuals should forget their land of their origin or of their ancestors. Let them look to the past, but let them also look to the future: let them look to the land of their ancestors, but let them also look to the land of their children. Let them become Canadians.

- Sir Wilfred Laurier,
Canada’s First French Prime Minister

ism and very serious crimes would face the threat of deportation. He stated that it was absurd for certain people to say that Canadian Tamils of Sri Lankan origin face the risk of losing their citizenship rights or face the threat of deportation due to the recent changes in Canadian citizenship laws and termed these false claims as “malicious propaganda”. He also claimed that the new provisions would help clear the backlog of applications for citizenship.

Commenting on Canada’s role in accepting refugees, the Minister stated



Hon. Chris Alexander, Canada’s Citizenship and Immigration Minister

that the country has met its commitment during the recent years in the number of refugees the country had agreed to accept, and is taking the necessary steps in regard to its commitment of taking in refugees from Syria due to the unsettled conditions in that country.

Ending the interview, Minister recalled that Canada celebrates its birthday on the first of this month and it will be a day memorable to all Canadians and irrespective of which country they came from, they are proud Canadians to live in a country that respects human values and different cultures.

Announcement of New Barrister & Solicitor

Mr. Vinayagamorthy Devadas of Toronto was called to the Ontario Bar as a Barrister & Solicitor on June 24, 2015.



See pages 23, 24 & 25 for more details

“Happy Canada Day! Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday!”

- pic via: Rathika Sitsabaiesan MP (facebook.com/rathikaspage)



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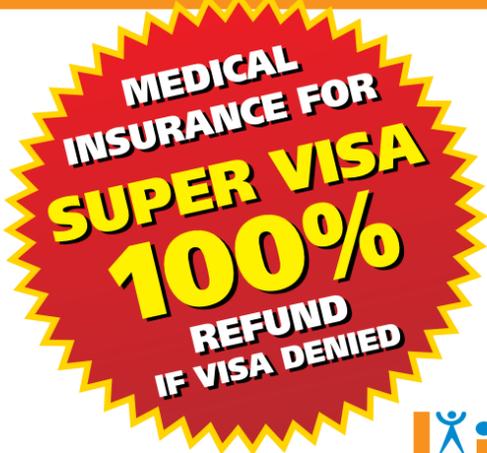
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Canola is Winning the Fight Against the Flea Beetle

Canada is one of the world's largest producers and exporters of canola, a plant that is not only used to make healthy cooking oil, but is also found in products like suntan oils and lubricants, as well as renewable, clean-burning biodiesel fuel.

While golden canola fields are an iconic vista across the Canadian prairies, canola farmers are faced with a threat that they need to fight: the flea beetle – a small but destructive insect that causes more than \$250 million in crop damage in Canada annually.

But the team at the Saskatoon Research Centre is looking at several options to help farmers grow canola with fewer interventions. One option involves fighting the battle with flea beetles and other pests with a “hairy” canola plant. This innovation is resistant to flea beetles, thanks to the tougher hairs on leaf and stem surfaces that act as a natural barrier to these pests. The research teams are also testing how this “hairy” approach may work on other plants, such as mustard.

- The market for canola products is growing, Canadian canola seed and oil exports accounting for almost 14 percent of total agriculture and food exports in 2013. That's \$7.3 billion in sales.

- The top export markets for canola in 2013 were China, the United States, Japan and Mexico.

Canadian Canola

Each summer, the Canadian Prairies are carpeted as far as the eye can see with the yellow blooms of canola plants. Canadian plant scientists developed the crop in the 1960s and by the 1970s, farmers were busily planting it in Canada's fertile soil. Today, canola has become one of Canada's most valuable crops. The plants produce a rich harvest of canola seed in the autumn, which is then crushed to produce canola oil. Most Canadian canola comes from the Prairies, where a cool climate and fertile soils provide an ideal place for growing the crop. But canola is planted across the country and it is harvested in vast quantities. Today, Canadian farmers are producing record amounts of canola to meet the growing demand for this crop.

Canadian canola products are in high demand around the world because modern technology and exacting standards guarantee that they will meet the expectations of buyers everywhere. The United States is our largest importer of canola oil and meal and Japan is our largest importer of seed, where it is crushed for oil. Mexico and China also import Canadian seed and canola meal is shipped to Indonesia, South Korea and other Pacific Rim



countries.

Healthy and nutritious

Canola oil is the cooking oil of choice for many consumers because it is so healthy. It has the least saturated fat of any culinary oil – half that of olive oil – and contains no trans fat or cholesterol. In fact, research shows that canola oil may help protect the heart when used in place of saturated fat.

Canola oil has other advantages, too. Its light texture and neutral flavour allow other ingredients to shine, such as in salad dressings, dips and marinades. Canola oil gives baked goods like cakes and breads a soft, moist texture, and its high smoke point makes it ideal for frying and sautéing. Canola oil is suited to all kinds of recipes and cuisines.

Beyond the kitchen

While canola oil is excellent for the kitchen, its uses go far beyond cooking, including cosmetics, printing inks, suntan oils, oiled fabrics and lubricants. Canola oil is also used to make a renewable, clean-burning and biodegradable alternative to diesel fuel called biodiesel. The nutritious meal that remains after canola seed is crushed for oil makes a high-protein feed for livestock.

Quality and consistency

To make certain that Canada provides its customers with canola of the very highest quality, we rely on the work of the Government of Canada's world-renowned Canadian Grain Commission (CGC), which has been operating for nearly a century. The CGC defines grading standards for all Canadian oilseed crops and ensures that these standards are rigorously applied to the annual canola harvest. Every canola grade is also analyzed in the CGC's Grain Research Laboratory to verify that it has the processing qualities our customers desire. And to make certain that all Canadian canola-based products are safe, they're closely monitored by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. The results are products of excellent quality and consistency, which means our customers always know exactly how Canadian canola products will perform.

Taste the Canadian difference

Grown, harvested and processed to the highest standards, Canadian canola offers the best in quality and nutrition. - www.agr.gc.ca

Aboriginal peoples have helped shape Canada's past and will be a vital part of our future - PM Harper



Prime Minister Stephen Harper on June 21st issued the following statement on the occasion of National Aboriginal Day:

“On National Aboriginal Day, I encourage all Canadians to pay tribute to the immense contributions, unique heritage and vibrant cultures of Aboriginal peoples who live, work and study in communities across Canada.

“Aboriginal peoples have always played a defining role in the development of this great country and continue to contribute greatly to all areas of Canadian life. The diverse cultures of Canada's First Nations, Métis and Inuit are celebrated across Canada from coast to coast to coast, from pow wows in British Columbia, to Back to Batoche Festival Days in Saskatchewan, to the Toonik Tyme Festival in Iqaluit.

“Our Government is committed to building strong First Nations, Métis

and Inuit communities. That is why over the past few years through both our economic action plans and legislation we have made significant contributions to education and training, community infrastructure – including healthcare and water treatment facilities – land claims, matrimonial rights, financial transparency, and emergency preparedness.

“Aboriginal peoples have helped shape Canada's past and will be a vital part of our future. During National Aboriginal Day and throughout National Aboriginal History Month in June, I encourage all Canadians to learn more about Canada's First Nations, Métis and Inuit, to recognize their integral contributions to the Canadian identity, and to participate in the many special events celebrating their cultures.”

(news.gc.ca)

'Canada is proud of supporting global efforts to protect the rights of refugees'

Statement from Minister Paradis, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie on World Refugee Day, June 20, 2015:

Canada has long been a place of solace for refugees. On the occasion of World Refugee Day, Canada is proud to reaffirm its continuing commitment to supporting global efforts to protect the rights of refugees, with the ultimate goal of saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity.

Canada welcomes about one in 10 refugees who are resettled globally. In

2014, Canada took in more than 12,300 refugees and increased funding for humanitarian assistance by 62 percent.

Canada also plays an important diplomatic role in demanding adherence to international protection standards and in seeking a resolution to the causes that lead to displacement.

On World Refugee Day, I encourage all Canadians to remember those around the world who lack a real and permanent home and who have limited access to the basic necessities of life.

(news.gc.ca)

Minister Kenney issues statement on Ramadan

The Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister for Multiculturalism, on June 17th issued the following statement to mark the start of Ramadan:

“With the arrival of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Muslims commemorate the revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad.

“For those observing the holy month of Ramadan, it is a time for worship, contemplation, self-sacrifice and devotion through charity, fasting and prayer. It is also a time for Muslims around the world to connect with fami-

lies, friends and the wider community, and also to help those less fortunate.

“Over the coming weeks, Muslims will gather in homes, mosques and community centres to break their daily fast at the evening meal known as Iftar, often inviting Canadians of different backgrounds to take part. I look forward to joining Canadian Muslims at Iftar events across the country.

“As Minister for Multiculturalism, I extend my best wishes for a peaceful Ramadan to all those observing this solemn month. “Ramadan Mubarak”

(news.gc.ca)

from the publisher's desk

PUBLISHING TEAM

Managing Editor & Publisher: Logan Velumailum, B. Sc. - toronto@monsoonjournal.com
Editorial & Marketing Consultant: Siva Sivapragasam - tsiva@rogers.com
Executive Editorial Board: Tashvir Narine - tashvir.narine@gmail.com
 Krishni Narine - krishni31@gmail.com
 K. Thirukumaran
Graphics & Layout Design: Santosh Kumar - kasantosh@gmail.com
Graphic Support: Suren Rasadurai
Photo Journalists: Gnane B. Gnanendran - digitalgnane@yahoo.ca,
 Rudy Ruthran - rudy@ruthran.com
Health & Care: Ayktah Grover - www.aurawellness.ca, Dr. Amal Siva, Jeavana Sritharan
 Dr. S. Sivanesan, Dr. Nuwan Fonseka, Dr. Shiyam Loganathan, Dr. Harshini Sriskanda
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 Devadas Chelvam, Kumar Punithavel, Nate Velumailum,
 Jennifer Dilipkumar, Partipan Kugadason (PK)
Business & Finance: Arun Senathirajah - asenathi@hotmail.com
 David Joseph - David.joseph@investorsgroup.com
 Jay Wigna - www.taxonecentre.com
Education: RG Education Centers - www.rgeducation.com
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Circulation Co-ordinator: Donald. J

Sri Lanka's proposal of "World Youth Skills Day" sees Maiden Year at UN on July 15



Despite the stances that may be contrary to this point, there is no denial that globalization has first and foremost been understood from a purely economic perspective. Today, national economies, including Canada and the United States, across the world continue to forge intricate ties with each other through activities like foreign trade and investment. As a result, this has seemingly created a global economy, which has now constituted a profound sense of interdependence to promote individual growth and prosperity.

Problematically, however, global unemployment still persists at considerably high levels, disproportionately associated with the world's youth. Opening up our ports and borders, while contributing to the variety of goods and services we consume, also means dramatically increased competition among the current global workforce for jobs scattered around. Although job scarcity is often seen as one factor, the asymmetrical effects felt by youth in their own work pursuits certainly stems from their lack of skills needed for the jobs of today's economy.

Youth remain one of the most marginalized groups in gaining meaningful employment on a normal day-to-day basis as well. Along these lines, World Youth Skills Day is characterized as a unique method to address those gaps in order to give a young individual a better chance to participate in our economy. World Youth Skills Day is an official United Nations day of observance that is held on July 15. Moreover, 2015 will actually be marked as the inaugural year of this day as it strives to fully resonate with governments of all nations.

The recently established initiative was originally designed by Sri Lanka, eventually achieving final pas-

sage within the UN General Assembly (GA) in November 2014. The Honourable Minister of Youth Affairs and Skills Development at the time, Dullas Alahapperuma, represented the Sri Lankan government's enthusiastic championing of the day of observance in the GA. From the island nation's view, "youth should be at the heart of development" of different forms of skills to develop their employment potential in the economy.

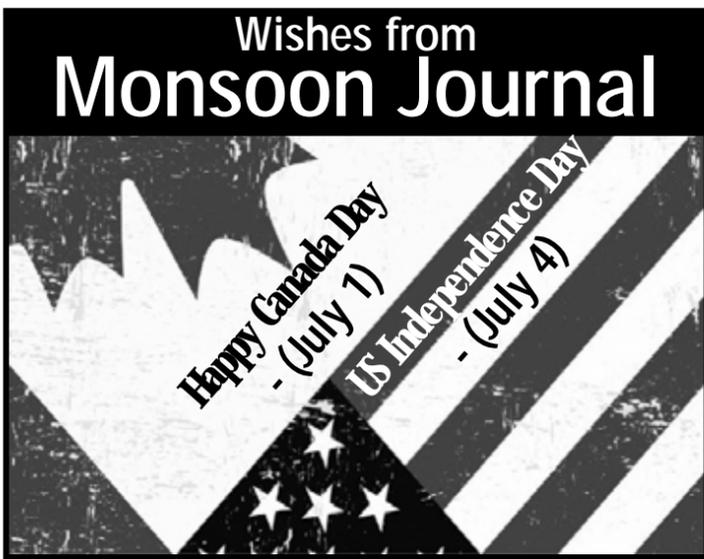
Accordingly, to further support this notion, Sri Lanka has crafted a network of vocational training centers that have built the skills of up to 25,000 of the nation's young people. With World Youth Skills Day, it hopes to inform all nations of the international community on the imperative of vocational and technical education and skills training. National governments must become vigilant on these needs by expanding policies towards skills training programs to reasonably equip youth with the abilities necessary for the economy.

To initiate this 1st annual edition, different sets of activities and initiatives are to be organized, aimed towards elevating an overall positive message around skills development. That will essentially concern how a proper set of skills not only contributes to local or global economic success, but the personal success of a young employee. As part of an introductory public campaign, youths around the globe are encouraged to submit videos describing their skills and employment to begin that conversation on youth employment. By getting involved in ensuring the success of this inaugural observance, it shall help spur future events and activities that leave a sustainable and influential presence on the continual development of our global economy.

Contributed by: **Harrish Thirukumaran**

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“Happiness is not something readymade. It comes from your own actions” - Dalai Lama

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Canadian Citizenship: "Fostering in new Canadians a stronger attachment to Canadian values and traditions"

Government welcomes Royal Assent of Bill C-24: The government celebrates the passage of reforms to the Citizenship Act:

Canada's Citizenship and Immigration Minister Chris Alexander on June 19th announced that reforms to the Citizenship Act received final passage and Royal Assent. The reforms will strengthen the rules around access to citizenship to ensure that new citizens are better prepared for full participation and integration into Canadian society, with the goal of fostering in new Canadians a stronger attachment to Canadian values and traditions.

Key reforms include:

Improving efficiency

Canada's citizenship program is being improved by reducing the decision-making process from three steps to one. It is expected that, by 2015-2016, this change will bring the average processing time for citizenship applications down to under a year. It is also projected that by 2015-2016, the current backlog will be reduced by more than 80 percent.

Reinforcing the value of Canadian citizenship

The government is ensuring citizenship applicants maintain strong ties to Canada. These amendments to the Citizenship Act provide a clearer indication that the "residence" period to qualify for citizenship in fact requires physical presence in Canada.

More applicants will now be required to meet language requirements and pass a knowledge test to ensure

that new citizens are better prepared to fully participate in Canadian society. New provisions will also help individuals with strong ties to Canada, such as by automatically extending citizenship to additional "Lost Canadians" who were born before 1947 as well as to their children born in the first generation outside Canada.

Cracking down on citizenship fraud

The updated Citizenship Act includes stronger penalties for fraud and misrepresentation (a maximum fine of \$100,000 and/or five years in prison) and expands the grounds to bar an application for citizenship to include foreign criminality, which will help improve program integrity.

Protecting and promoting Canada's interests and values

Finally, the amendments bring Canada in line with most of our peer countries, by providing that citizenship can be revoked from dual nationals who are convicted of serious crimes such as terrorism, high treason and spying offences (depending on the sentence received) or who take up arms against Canada. Permanent residents who commit these acts will be barred from citizenship.

As a way of recognizing the important contributions of those who serve Canada in uniform, permanent residents who are members of the Canadian Armed Forces will have quicker access to Canadian citizenship. The Act also stipulates that children born to Canadian parents serving abroad as servants of the Crown are able to pass on



Hon Chris Alexander
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Canadian citizenship to children they have or adopt outside Canada.

Quick facts

- Requiring 14-64 year-olds to meet knowledge and language requirements provides an incentive for more individuals to acquire official language proficiency and civics knowledge, which helps them successfully integrate into Canadian society.

- Citizenship applicants will need to be physically present in Canada for a total of four out of their last six years. In addition, they will need to be physically present in Canada for 183 days per year for at least four of those six years. These provisions will come into force in approximately a year.

- Under the new streamlined decision-making model, citizenship officers will decide all aspects of a citizenship

application. Under the old model, obtaining citizenship was a three-step process that involved duplication of work.

- Since 2006, Canada has welcomed over 1,300,000 proud new Canadians. Citizenship and Immigration Canada received 333,860 citizenship applications in 2013, the highest volume ever.

"Our government is proud to announce that the first comprehensive reforms to the Citizenship Act in a generation have now become law. Moving forward, the value of citizenship will be reinforced and new citizens will be able to acquire citizenship more quickly. Our government has strengthened the rules around access to citizenship to ensure that they reflect its true value, and that new citizens are better prepared for full participation for life in Canada. Canadian citizenship is highly valued around the world and, with this balanced set of reforms, our government is ensuring that this remains so." Said Chris Alexander, Canada's Citizenship and Immigration Minister.

Minister Chris Alexander further stated - "Our government expects new Canadians to take part in the democratic life, economic potential and the rich cultural traditions of Canada. Our government remains committed to the successful integration of new citizens into our labour market and our communities, ensuring that they are better prepared to assume the responsibilities of citizenship, and fostering in new Canadians a strong attachment to Canada." - news.gc.ca

Conservatives ignore Canadians, ram through Bill C-51

Despite overwhelming opposition from Canadians and evidence from experts that C-51 is dangerous and fails to make Canadians any safer, unaccountable and un-elected Conservative senators passed the bill last night without a second thought.

"Thousands of Canadians took to the streets to protest this bill because it will erode our rights and freedoms," said NDP Public Safety critic Randall

Garrison (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca). "Terrorism is a very real threat, but there can be no tradeoff between public safety and our civil liberties. It's shameful that the Senate Conservatives gave in to fear and division instead of standing up and defending Canadian values."

Numerous experts have criticized Bill C-51 as dangerous and ineffective, including four former Prime ministers,

the Canadian Bar Association and a group of over 100 academics and 60 business people. This legislation lacks important monitoring and surveillance measures and is deliberately vague.

"As usual, Conservatives are playing politics instead of standing up for what's right," said Garrison. "Canadians deserve better."

- ndp.ca



Randall Garrison MP



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'An NDP government would implement a national aging strategy that would include addressing elder abuse'

Statement from the NDP on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, June 15, 2015:

NDP Seniors critic Irene Mathysen (London—Fanshawe) made the following statement on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day:

"After a lifetime of hard work, and with all their contributions to their communities and families, seniors have the right to grow old in comfort and dignity.

"Unfortunately, some seniors are victims of abuse and negligence, sometimes by their close relatives and friends. With the number of seniors in Canada expected to double over the next 25 years, New Democrats understand that Canada needs a strategy in place to ensure seniors have the supports they need.

"However, instead of making retirement more secure, the Harper Conser-

vatives increased the Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement age of eligibility from 65 to 67 and have repeatedly broken their promise to work with the provinces to boost Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits for all Canadians. This reckless move will only push more seniors into poverty.

"Our seniors deserve better.

"An NDP government would implement a national aging strategy that would include addressing elder abuse; rolling back the retirement age from 67 to 65; and expanding the CPP and Quebec Pension Plan. With practical steps like this we can ensure that seniors are able to lead happy, healthy, and comfortable lives. While the Conservatives keep telling Canadians that they need to work more, and longer, for less, Tom Mulcair's NDP believes Canadians are entitled to a secure and dignified retirement." - ndp.ca

Mayor Tory Launches Tamil Fest, Event Expected to Attract Thousands



Launch highlights excitement over the very first Tamil Street Festival outside of Asia taking place this summer in Toronto

The very first Tamil Street Festival outside of Asia was announced recently with flair at the Markham Convention Centre in Toronto. Mayor John Tory was on hand to officially launch the festivities and show his strong support for this two-day event to be hosted by the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC).

With a thriving Tamil Canadian community that is 300,000 strong in the Toronto region alone, this festival is expected to draw tens of thousands of attendees from across the Greater Toronto Region, Ontario, Quebec and the USA. Premiere Kathleen Wynn sent a video greeting stating that, "through

Tamil Fest 2015 we come together to celebrate the rich diversity of Ontario and to recognize the importance of building an inclusive multicultural society."

The festival has ambitious plans to engage Canada's diverse communities and showcase the unique Tamil culture on a large scale. The eventual goal of attracting Tamils from all over Canada and the USA for this weekend festival is part of the festival's long term strategic goal.

This unique platform aspires to showcase and highlight the many individual and collective achievements of the Tamil Canadian community. CTC President Raj Thavaratnasingam stated, "CTC now is poised to take the community and our art, culture and cuisine

Trudeau presents Liberal plan for real change

The Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, Justin Trudeau, on June 16th presented a plan to restore openness and transparency to government.

"After 10 years under Stephen Harper, Ottawa is broken. This is a comprehensive plan to fix it. This is real change," said Mr. Trudeau. "Our plan builds on measures we have already implemented – like the proactive disclosure of parliamentarians' expenses and removing Senators from the Liberal Caucus – but it also moves far beyond them. It is a sweeping agenda for change at the heart of which is a simple idea: transparent government is good government."

The Liberal plan will raise the bar on transparency and accountability, and modernize the way government works, by implementing measures, including but not limited to: requiring that government data and information is open by default; giving Canadians a voice in Ottawa by allowing more independence for Members of Parliament and government watchdogs; ending partisanship in the Senate; ensuring open and fair elections by moving forward with electoral reform; strengthening Elections Canada and



banning partisan government advertising; making evidence-based decisions on programs and policies; providing better and more timely services to Canadians with a more inclusive and engaging policy-making process; and including an equal number of women and men in a Liberal Cabinet.

"Canadians have heard enough talk. They want to see real changes implemented, not just promised in order to obtain votes," said Mr. Trudeau. "With this comprehensive plan, Liberals will shed new light on government and ensure that it is focused on the people it is meant to serve: Canadians." - Liberal.ca

NDP statement on the 30th anniversary of the Air India tragedy

Official Opposition Leader Tom Mulcair made the following statement on the 30th anniversary of the Air India tragedy:

"Thirty years ago – on June 23, 1985, Air India Flight 182 exploded over the Atlantic Ocean killing 329 innocent people, including 280 Canadians.

"On behalf of Canada's New Democrats, I extend heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of those who died as a result of that reprehensible act, and invite all Canadians to join us as we honour their memories.

"New Democrats are committed to making sure that acts of violence and terror like this are never repeated.

"Today, all Canadians honour the memory of the victims of the Air India tragedy, and stand united with their loved ones in grief and remembrance."

to another level with the first ever Tamil Street festival outside of Asia."

This two-day festival is a unique platform that will showcase and exhibit traditional and modern Tamil culture, cuisine, arts and entertainment. Some of the highlights of this two-day festival:

- World class international Tamil entertainment
 - A showcase of local Toronto Tamil talent through art and culture
 - A variety of traditional Tamil cuisine
 - A Tamil Canadian historical museum chronicling the Tamil Canadian community from the early 1960's to the present
 - Interactive educational youth and children's exhibitions and workshops
 - Traditional Tamil street performers
- The event was well attended by

over 30 media outlets from across the Greater Toronto Area.

In addition to Mayor John Tory and Minister Mitzi Hunter representing Government of Ontario, elected officials MP Rathika Sitsabaiesan, MPP Bas Balkissoon and Councillor Raymond Cho from the constituency where the street festival is scheduled to take place attended the launch extended their support to the festival.

Tamil Fest 2015 promises to be an extravagant display of Tamil culture, tradition and heritage to be held on August 29th and 30th all day on Morningside Avenue between Neilson Road and Finch Avenue. For more information visit: www.tamilfest.ca



New Opportunities For Wounded, Widowed And Orphans Of War - affected Tamil communities in the North & East

NOW-WOW is an organization that is working exclusively for the charitable purpose of providing new opportunities for permanently wounded, widowed and orphans of war among the war-affected Tamil communities in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka.

NOW-WOW conceives, plans, and implements income generating projects for said war victims. Such opportunities include, but not limited to, education, nutritional support, skill development, micro-credit facilities and development of small scale industries. Many students in these areas are from women-headed families who are finding it extremely difficult to survive and educate their children. NOW-WOW has identified eligible university and grade school students to receive supplemental education funds and attend leaders of tomorrow workshops organized by NOW-WOW.

NOW-WOW charity is currently approved currently for a temporary spot on the Global Giving site. Global Giving provides with an opportunity to



reach donors on a greater scale in the future with matching funds for donations. Now-Wow has one month to raise \$5000 from at least 40 donors starting June 1st 2015 to reserve a permanent spot. In light of 2015 as NOW-WOW's year of education, they are seeing through many education projects

over the course of this year. Now-Wow requests donors to help them reach this goal. No amount is too small for them.

Project Name: Education of Tamil War Affected Students

Starting at midnight on June 1st 2015

Project link: <http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/education-of-tamil-war-affected-students/>

A short url for Twitter, SMS, or Facebook is: <http://goto.gg/20430>. The project can be shared on your Facebook or Twitter, by clicking the Facebook and twitter share links. Now-Wow thanks everyone for their continued support.

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Release of political prisoners is of crucial significance to the prisoners themselves, their families and loved ones and of great importance to the Tamil people

By M.A. Sumanthiran

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." - Nelson Mandela, 'Long Walk to Freedom'.

Mandela, perhaps the world's most famous political prisoner, demonstrated the truth of these words when he went on to become the President of South Africa. The Mandela administration pursued a policy of reconciliation amongst the peoples of South Africa. It recognized that all communities must be able to experience the freedoms that are rightfully theirs. Until this happens, there can be no true reconciliation. And until there is true reconciliation, a nation cannot have true freedom.

Mahinda Rajapaksa would have us believe that freedom came to our country with the military defeat of the LTTE in May 2009. He never let us forget that it was he who 'won the war' for us, and with good reason. The Rajapaksa regime believed that the military defeat of the LTTE would pave the way for it to become the Rajapaksa dynasty. It believed that the peoples' gratitude for being freed from the terror of war would blind them to the fact that many in Sri Lanka were being subjected to another form of terrorism – that of the State.

False alarms

And for 10 years, it looked like they were right. For 10 years, it looked like the iron fist of their rule would never unclench. In addition to playing on the peoples' gratitude for 'ending the war', the regime began resorting to fear mongering - repeatedly warning us (somewhat contradictorily to their claim of having successfully stamped out the LTTE) that only they could protect us from the threat of the LTTE rising again. When the hollowness of this claim too became apparent, they resorted to blatant intimidation and thuggery – rigging elections, killing and intimidating journalists and human rights activists, and eventually silencing anyone who dared to criticize them in any way.

Then on the 8th of January this year, Sri Lanka finally decided it had had enough. And against all the odds, we ended the Rajapaksa rule in Sri Lanka.

Ending the rule of the Rajapaksa regime in Sri Lanka was the first all important step in bringing true freedom to our nation. President Maithripala

Casting off their chains – and Ours:



M.A. Sumanthiran

Sirisena has to date, shown himself to be a man who understands that freedom is not merely a military victory. He has also accepted the important role of reconciliation in the achievement of genuine freedom in Sri Lanka. In his speech on Independence Day, 2015 President Sirisena said:

"Although by 2009, after the defeat of LTTE terrorism, and bringing peace to our land, although we had the opportunity to take the physical resources of the land towards development, we were unable to do so; and to bring together the minds of the people of the North and South.

"To end the war against terror, our heroic troops were able with their guns to silence the guns of terrorism. However, the biggest challenge we face today, is that of bringing together the minds of the people of the North and South, and through a process of reconciliation bring about co-existence and national understanding, and thus take our great Motherland forward as a land rich in human affection and understanding."

Genuine attempt

So far, he has been true to his word. His government seems genuine in its efforts to bring about reconciliation by ensuring that all peoples of Sri Lanka are able to enjoy the freedoms that are rightfully theirs. The clamp down on free expression has been lifted; private lands belonging to the Tamil people for generations, which were illegally held under so called 'High Security Zones' are being released back to their rightful owners; the government has recognized the need for an investigation into crimes committed during the war and have committed to such a process.

A most significant and necessary

step towards reconciliation is the release of Tamil political prisoners. For this reason, the Tamil National Alliance has for several years consistently urged the Sri Lankan Government to release these political prisoners. During its very first meeting with President Sirisena following his appointment, this was one of the most important issues raised by the Tamil National Alliance. President Sirisena indicated that he was agreeable to the release of Tamil political prisoners, as a matter of policy.

It goes without saying that the release of these prisoners is of crucial significance to the prisoners themselves, and their families and loved ones. It is also of great importance to the Tamil people. Many of these prisoners have been incarcerated allegedly on mere 'suspicion' under the draconian 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' - they have not been charged, much less found guilty of, any crime whatsoever. Thus, they have been languishing in prison – in some cases for several years solely for political reasons. They are one of many reminders to the Tamil people that their voice would not be tolerated. Accordingly, their release will signify to the Tamil people that they finally have a Government that is willing to genuinely listen to them.

Acceptable solution

And it is for this reason that the release of these prisoners is significant not just for the Tamil people, but for all peoples of this country. It is a crucial step in rebuilding trust; in setting the stage for negotiations for a solution acceptable to us all.

The release of political prisoners has been recognized as having a crucial role in peace processes.

"...combined with other political steps, the release of political prisoners is a workable confidence building measure in conflict resolution and mutual risk taking between the main parties to the conflict.

In situations of politically motivated violence, prisoner release helps armed factions to recognize the benefits of peaceful means to resolve the conflict.

In addition, it grants them incentives to consider the possibility of declaring a ceasefire and entering the political process. Equally importantly, in negotiations phases, it also encourages political parties to engage, or remain

engaged, in peace talks...

...prisoner release supports reciprocity principles and demonstrates good will. Commenting on the critical issues of trust and good faith in peace processes, Mayer notes:

"Trust is built by incremental and reciprocal risk taking.

As people make tentative concessions or share important data and receive reciprocal concessions and information, confidence is built and resolution promoted' - Mayer, B., *The Dynamics of Conflict Resolution: A Practitioner's Guide*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass), 2000, p 207:

"...one of the final lessons we can draw here is that the engagement of political prisoners in peacemaking can take two forms. The first is indirect, which mainly involves internal discussions and consultations between prisoner groups about appropriate strategies. The second is direct which includes voicing support for political leadership and agreement with its efforts to negotiate a peace deal. Critically, these two types of engagement facilitate a third significant agency which successful peace processes struggle to embody, namely the wider community's acceptance of peace talks and subsequent negotiated settlements. Without a strong grassroots acceptance of political deals, it is unlikely that these deals will be sustainable." - Yaser Alashqar, "Political Prisoners in Peacemaking Processes: The Case of Northern Ireland", February 2012.

Distinct possibility

Sri Lanka is at a critical juncture. For the first time in a long time, a peaceful resolution to the conflict looks a distinct possibility. It is still in the future, it will still take hard work, genuine political will and compromise by both sides, but it is finally possible. At this stage, it is commendable that President Sirisena is willing to extend a long overdue gesture of goodwill to the Tamil people.

I call on the Sri Lankan government to follow up on this willingness with speedy action to release the political prisoners. It must do this not merely for the sake of those prisoners, their families and loved ones, and the Tamil people, but for the sake of all Sri Lanka's peoples.

(M.A. Sumanthiran Attorney at Law, is a former Member of Parliament – Sri Lanka, and a leader of the Tamil National Alliance)



Around the World

Award winning French film "Dheepan" with a majority of conversations in Tamil releases next month

"Dheepan" - The Film telling the tale of three Tamil refugees in France won the top film award Palme d'or at Cannes Film Festival in May. The film is directed by Jacques Audiard.

The film relating the story of three Sri Lankan Refugees' life in France, has a former LTTE member Anthonythasan Jesuthasan starring in the lead role. Jesuthasan writing under the nm de plume Shoba Sakthi is a well-known writer in Tamil. He lives in Paris.

The three main roles are played by Tamil actors of Sri Lankan and In-

dian origin. They are Anthonythasan Jesuthasan as Dheepan/Sivadhasan, Indian stage actress Kalieaswari Srinivasan as Yalini and Claudine Vinasithamby as Illayaal. 10 year old Claudine Vinasithamby is a student in Paris and her parents are Sri Lankan Tamils.

Though much of the film is set in France, over 85% of the words spoken in the film are in the Tamil language in the form of conversations by the trio and other Tamil characters in their mother tongue. It's official French release date is listed as August 26.



Anthonythasan Jesuthasan (Shobasakthi), Kalieaswari Sreenivasan, Claudine Vinasithamby and Jacques Audiard



Scene from "Dheepan"



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ROUGE VALLEY INTRODUCES NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

NEW BOARD MEMBERS WELCOMED AT AGM, PREVIOUS CHAIR THANKED

The new chair of Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) enters his first week by introducing the hospital's new strategic plan and welcoming five new board members.

Fred Clifford, previously the RVHS Board of Directors vice-chair, also thanked outgoing chair Joan Wideman for her "three years of tremendous leadership."

He says, "Joan's leadership as our chair has been exemplary, including her guidance as chair of the steering committee for the new strategic plan (2015-2018). On behalf of the board, we say a heartfelt thank you to Joan for her unwavering commitment and leadership."

Wideman will continue as the past-chair and member of the RVHS Board of Directors.

New strategic plan

The new Rouge Valley strategic plan, approved at Tuesday, June 23 rd's board meeting, is the culmination of several months of research, engagement in focus groups, interviews, meetings and surveys with more than 1,500 stakeholders, who are: community members, including elected leaders; staff; doctors; volunteers, including members of the Community Advisory Group; and the RVHS Board of Directors.

Clifford says, "We thank our community and hospital participants for their engagement in the process that started last fall in the development of this clear and exciting strategic plan, which features a new vision statement and new strategic directions."

"The new vision statement represents Rouge Valley's ongoing work as a leader in quality patient care for our communities."

The new vision statement is: Together – the best at what we do.

"This statement builds upon Rouge Valley's previous vision statement," he says.

Clifford explains, "It means that we will be the best at what we do:

■ Together — With our patients and families to best meet their needs;

■ Together — As a team of staff, doctors, and volunteers;

■ Together — As a system working with other healthcare providers, local partners and government to deliver services for patients and their families."

To achieve that vision, the hospital has set out three strategic directions under the themes of:

- Patient Experience;
- System Champions; and
- Workplace of Choice.

Rouge Valley is committed to being "Innovators of a Quality Patient Experience" in its first strategic direction. The hospital will achieve this by consistently offering exceptional quality services that exceed the expectations of patients, families and our communities through innovative practices and technological solutions.

"Champions of a Connected Health System for Patients" is its second strategic direction. The hospital will achieve this by ensuring that the patient's perspective drives a more unified journey of care. Clifford adds, "We know that patients and their families need a true system that is easier for them to navigate."

Rouge Valley will become a "Workplace of Choice," as stated in its third strategic direction. The hospital will promote innovation, excellence and continuous improvement throughout Rouge Valley Health

System. It will attract and keep talented healthcare practitioners and professionals, administrative and support staff, and volunteers, who are focused on a positive patient and team experience.

The new strategic plan will begin its rollout this summer and fall.

New chair and new board members

Chair Fred Clifford

The RVHS Board of Directors appointed Fred Clifford as the new chair at the 17th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Members on Tuesday, June 23.

As the former RVHS Board vice-chair, his experience with Rouge Valley and in his career has already brought senior-level leadership to the hospital. He is a senior partner with Ernst & Young LLP, a global professional services firm and has served a wide variety of clients both within Canada and internationally across a range of industries. Clifford is the Canadian leader of the financial accounting and advisory practice. He has a longstanding record of service with the Rouge Valley Health System Foundation, having served 15 years on its board of directors. He served as chair of the board of the Centenary Health Centre Foundation from 1997 to 2001 and was the vice-chair of the Rouge Valley Health System Foundation from 2005 to 2009. He has been active in a variety of other charities including the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, where he was a member of the central zone advisory board.

2015 Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) Board of Directors – Nominees & Reappointments

There are five new members of the board, announced at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Members on Tuesday.

Jane Bishop

Jane Bishop is a senior healthcare professional with over 25 years' experience in healthcare services in Canada, the UK, Ireland and the USA. She trained as a registered general nurse (RGN) in London and then as a registered pediatric nurse (RSCN).

Thelson Desamour

Thelson Desamour is a litigation lawyer specializing in insurance matters, and was called to the Bar in Ontario in 2006. He is currently in-house counsel at Desjardins General Insurance Group, prior to which he served as in-house counsel at another national insurance company. Desamour has also served as a mediator with the Financial Services Commission of Ontario.

Christine Honrade

Christine Honrade, chartered professional accountant and certified general accountant, brings over 25 years of financial reporting and management accounting experience in the multi-billion-dollar real estate and construction industries to the RVHS Board of Directors.

Hari Subramaniam

Hari Subramaniam is the chief executive officer of eCamion Inc., a smart grid and storage company based in Scarborough. He is also a director of Inspectech Analygas Group and vice-chair of Energy Storage Ontario.

Munir Suleman

Munir Suleman recently retired after a distinguished 27-year career with Scotiabank, where he was responsible for overseeing the bank's global tax affairs in his role as senior vice-president and global head of taxation. In 2005, he was selected by Scotiabank executive management to complete the Ivey Executive Program at the Richard Ivey School of Business in London, Ontario.

■ Dr. Naresh Mohan, chief of staff;
■ Amelia McCutcheon, chief nursing executive, vice-president, cardiac, cancer, critical care;

■ Dr. Joanne Ma, president, Medical Staff Society;

■ Dr. Henry Huang, vice-president, Medical Staff Society; ■ Judith Barker, chair, RVHS Foundation; ■ Nancy Maxwell, alternate representative of the RVHS Foundation.

Honorary RVHS Board life members:



Board reappointments

Shane Hardy

Shane Hardy is chair, partner and secretary of the Business Law Group at Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP. He was licensed to practice law in 2002 and advanced quickly to partnership at Cassels, Brock & Blackwell (intellectual property/trademark specialty), becoming the youngest partner in the firm's 125-year history.

Graeme McKay

Graeme McKay has spent more than 30 years with IBM Canada Ltd. in a variety of professional, management and executive positions. He is currently the IBM Canada vice-president responsible for IBM's overall relationship with the Ontario government, healthcare, education and municipal sectors.

Terri McKinnon

Terri McKinnon is a chartered accountant and partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) LLP. She is leader at PwC of the Greater Toronto Area assurance healthcare practice. In addition to providing core audit services to a diversified client base, she provides advisory services in the areas of governance, internal control, risk management and accounting.

The 2015/16 Board of Directors, Rouge Valley Health System

■ Yazdi Bharucha ■ Dave Barlow
■ Fred Clifford ■ Dave Goulding
■ Shane Hardy ■ Ome Jamal
■ Susan Kerr ■ Jim Macpherson
■ Graeme McKay ■ Terri McKinnon
■ Thelson Desamour ■ Christine Honrade
■ Hari Subramaniam
■ Munir Suleman ■ Jane Bishop ■ Joan Wideman

The ex-officio directors of the RVHS Board are:

■ Andrée Robichaud, president and chief executive officer;

■ Margaret Birch; and ■ Ed Fleury.
Board members ending their terms thanked

Members of the RVHS Board of Directors, who have ended their terms, were recognized at the AGM.

Earlier this year, Lisa Mattam, who was chair of the Community Advisory Group, was thanked for her years of service. Ending their terms Tuesday, June 23, were: Douglas Melville; Lynda Mungall; Janet Ecker; and Jay Kaufman.

Douglas Melville joined the board two years ago bringing his experience in the banking sector as the Ombudsman and CEO of the Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments, and the Chairman of the International Network of Financial Services Ombudsman Schemes.

Lynda Mungall has been the chair of the board's human resources committee and a member of the finance and audit, and of board executive committees. She has spent seven years with the board.

Janet Ecker was a board member for 11 years. As the president and CEO of the Toronto Financial Services Alliance, her breadth of experience has continued to grow. A former MPP and Ontario cabinet minister of Finance, Education, and Community and Social Services, Ecker's energy and depth on so many issues has been a great benefit to the hospital and the board. She has served as a chair and member of many committees, and as chair of the RVHS Board of Directors during a pivotal time of reorganization for Rouge Valley.

Jay Kaufman is the past-chair of the board, who has served on many committees and has been instrumental in leading and advising the hospital through several challenging and successful changes thanks to his senior experience in government in Ontario and Manitoba. He has served as a member of the board's governance and nominating committee and the executive committee. Kaufman has spent 13 years with the RVHS Board of Directors.



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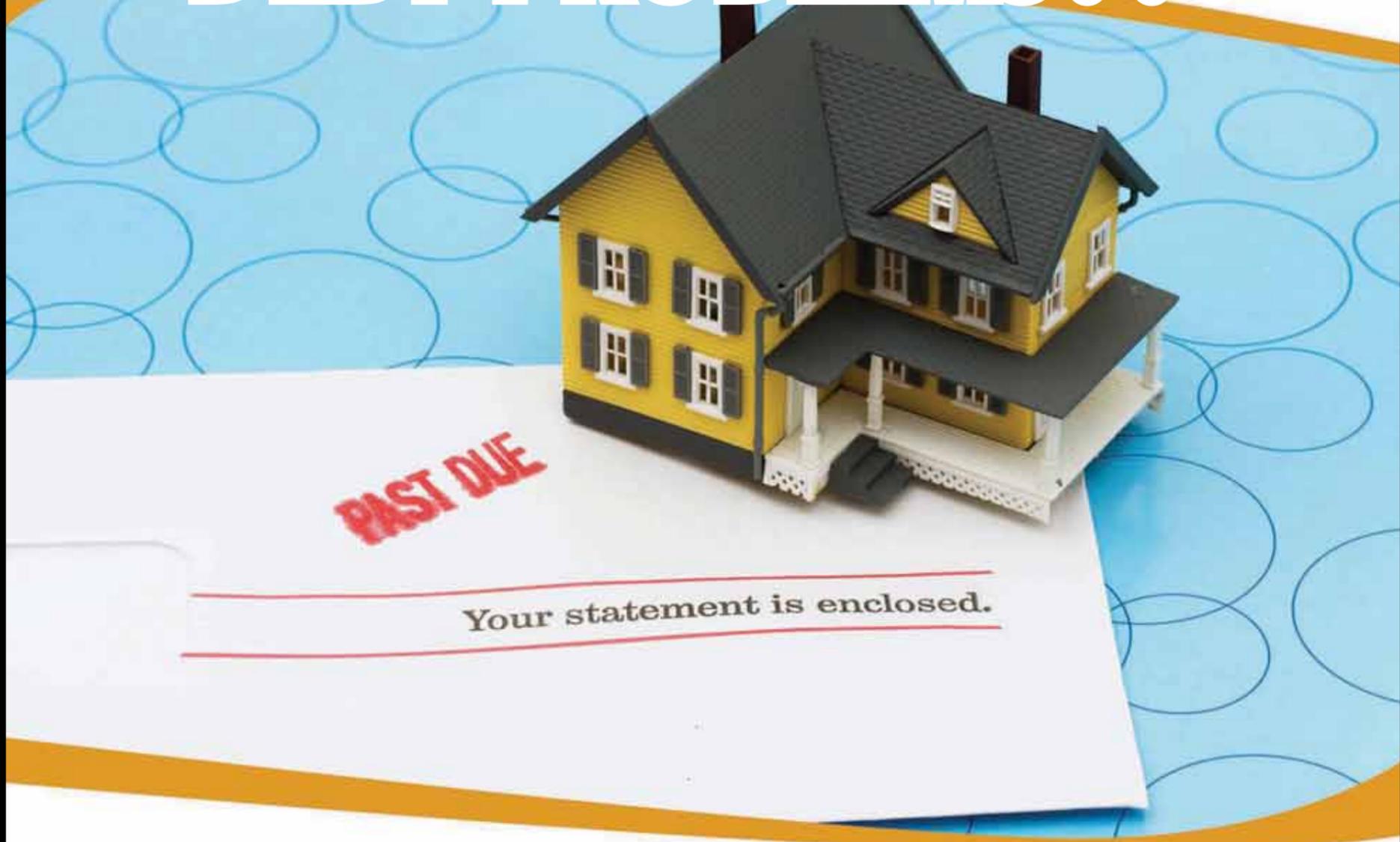
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TORONTO'S TAMIL COMMUNITY DONATES OVER \$250,000 TOWARDS SCARBOROUGH HOSPITAL FOUNDATION THROUGH CTCC'S ANNUAL WALKATHON



By Siva Sivapragasam

The Canadian Tamil community has demonstrated its "giving back to the community" spirit through the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce to raise over \$250,000 over the years for the Scarborough Hospital Foundation through the Chamber sponsored annual walkathon.

This year's annual Walkathon was held recently at the Kidstown Water Park with a 4 Km. walk raising \$10,000. In addition, an auction of items was also held after the walk. The contributions for this year's walkathon will continue to be received until October.

The participants demonstrated a great amount of enthusiasm and encouragement for a worthy cause to improve the services of the Scarborough Hospitals. The CEO & President of the Scarborough Hospital Foundation Michael Mazza addressed the participants & guests who attended the Walkathon. He thanked the CTCC and its membership for their tireless efforts over the past several years in raising these funds for the Hospitals. He remarked that the funds collected will go a long way to improve the services in the Hospitals.



It may be mentioned here that the Scarborough Hospital Foundation has recognized the Chamber's efforts in raising funds by giving the name of the Chamber to one of the units in the Emergency and Critical Care Center in the Hospital.



(Seen here are some pictures taken at this year's Walkathon)



Monsoon Journal is proud to inform everyone that we are in our 10th year of circulation. We thank all our advertisers, readers and well-wishers who helped us reach this milestone.



The Evolving Human Body: Hidden Organs



By: Jeavana
Sritharan,
BHSc, MHSc,
PhD Student

Do you ever wonder what specific organs in the human body actually do? Do you ever wonder what hidden organs are responsible for in the human body? The human body is made up of many organs, all of which have important roles. Organs like the spleen and appendix are often forgotten and little importance is placed on them until a health issue presents itself. These organs may have had more complex functions in past species, but as the human race evolves, organs like the spleen and appendix became less imperative to the survival of the human body. Often, other organs can carry forward the functions of these hidden organs.

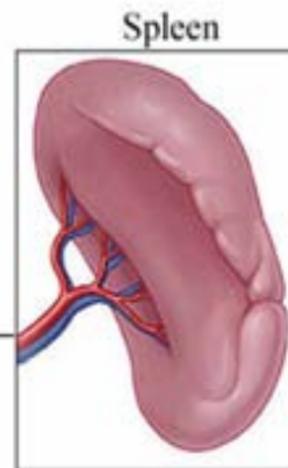
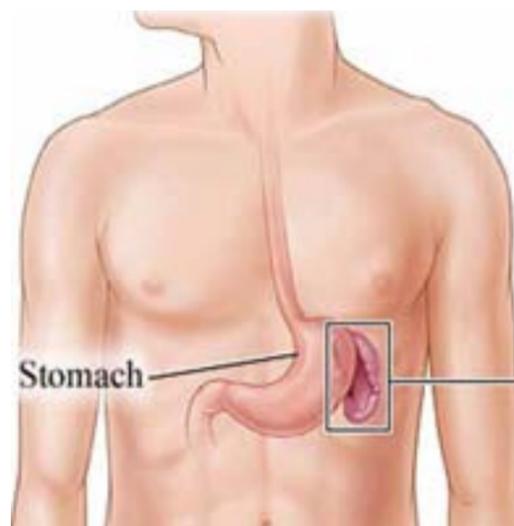
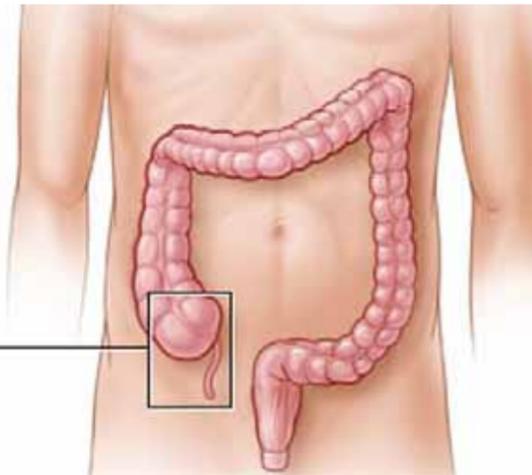
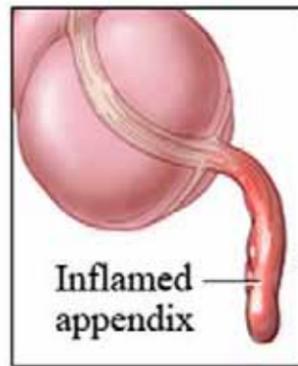
The Spleen

The spleen is a small organ the size of a clenched fist on the left hand side of the abdomen area but is the largest organ in the lymphatic system. The spleen is often forgotten but has many important functions. It helps filter blood, stores platelets, creates new blood cells, and is of value for the immune system.

The spleen is similar to the body's lymph nodes. The spleen contains two main tissue types which are white and red pulp. The white pulp is lymphatic material which is made up of white blood cells. The red pulp is made up of blood filled cavities and splenic cords. The cords contain different red and white blood cells.

The spleen may not be recognized as an integral part of the body but it aids the immune system. When blood flows into the spleen it enters the white pulp and red pulp. White blood cells help to recognize invasive pathogens like bacteria and viruses and the spleen white blood cells help to stop these infections. The red pulp helps to remove old and damaged red blood cells and helps to store the body's supply of platelets. It is also important in unborn babies as the red pulp acts like bone marrow and leads to the production of red blood cells.

The spleen is not essential to life and people can live without a spleen. Other organs share similar functions to the spleen and can manage these functions without the spleen. During a se-



vere health illness or injury, the spleen may be removed which is known as a splenectomy. Individuals who get the spleen removed may be more prone to infections as they no longer have the spleen's function to fight off bacteria or viruses. Due to this risk, different antibiotics may be provided.

The Appendix

The appendix is a blind ended tube connected to the cecum and is located in the lower right area of the abdomen. The human appendix is often recognized as a vestigial structure which in other words means it is recognized as an organ that has lost its original function. The open core of the appendix drains into the cecum and the wall of the appendix contains lymphatic tissue that is a part of the human body immune system. The appendix also has a layer of muscle but this muscle is poorly developed.

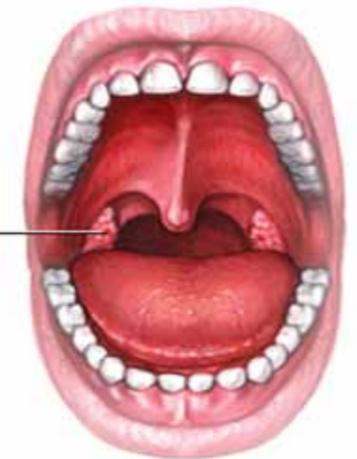
The most common disease of the appendix is appendicitis which is the inflammation of the appendix. Usually, pain will begin in the center of the abdomen and tends to be poorly localized. As inflammation persists, the pain begins to localize and the removal of the appendix becomes unavoidable. Without removal of the appendix the inflammation can lead to the appendix rupturing which can further lead to shock and eventually death. Appendicitis is

gan. The appendix is a puzzling organ as researchers try to figure out the ultimate purpose of such an organ but until then it is continued to be recognized as a vestigial organ.

The Tonsils

Another interesting component of the human body is the tonsils. Tonsils are composed of tissue similar to the lymph nodes and are large masses of tissue on either side of the back of the throat.

The tonsils are seen as an initial line of defense for the human body for incoming bacteria and viruses. However, the importance of this function is only seen in the first year of life. Following the first year, it is unclear as to how the tonsils affect the immunity of the body. Children often get their tonsils removed following tonsillitis and there are no serious risks to having them removed. It does not affect the immune system in the future for those who have theirs removed. Tonsillitis can occur at any age and is quite common in children. Symptoms include sore throat, fever, and swollen tonsils. If tonsillitis goes untreated it may lead to strep



a medical emergency and requires immediate surgical removal. Some symptoms related to appendicitis include abdominal pain, abdominal swelling, nausea, loss of appetite, and fever.

The appendix is known to possibly aid in fighting digestive problems but in many recent studies this function has not been apparent especially in developing children. Research also shows that individuals born without an appendix are generally healthier and as the human race evolves it may be possible that this vestigial organ will no longer be a part of the human body. The appendix is seen to be more of a risk than a benefit and due to the number of appendicitis cases every year around the world, appendicitis may be evolution's way of phasing out the or-

throat and possibly other health issues.

There are other elements of the human body that have reduced functions and may be removed due to risks related to infections. It is interesting to see how the evolution of the human body changes the needs of the human body and how evolution will impact the future of the human race.

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 she is the Co-Founder of the webpage, Health Perspectives. Contact email: info@healthperspectives.ca



THE SCARBOROUGH HOSPITAL LAUNCHES NEW STRATEGIC PLAN AT ITS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) launched its new 2015-2019 Strategic Plan at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on June 23.

"This has been a tremendous year of accomplishments for our team, including our new Strategic Plan, Forward Together: Building a Healthier Scarborough," says Robert Biron, President and CEO, TSH.

"There is a collaborative spirit that is alive and well at our hospital. This is the same spirit with which we approached the development of this plan. Together with our stakeholders, we took a deep look at the trends, priorities, and opportunities before us. From this comprehensive planning process, we created a bold new roadmap for our hospital."

TSH's new Strategic Plan highlights four new strategic directions:

- Patients as Partners;
- Innovation and Learning;
- Integrated Care Networks; and,
- Quality and Sustainability.

"The strategic priorities outlined in this plan will continue to deepen our relationships with our many stakeholder groups, as well as shape even more quality, responsive, innovative, and integrated care and services," says Janet Dalicandro, TSH Board Chair.

TSH continued to deliver solid fiscal management, ending the 2014-2015 year on budget with an operating surplus of over \$840,000. Operating efficiencies were realized through numerous strategies, including TSH's adoption and spread of LEAN quality improvement methods across the hospital. Concurrently, the hospital maintained or enhanced patient safety, quality of care, and a healthy workplace for its team. Several examples were highlighted at the AGM:

- A 50 per cent lower hospital readmission rate for patients of the Virtual Ward and Assess and Restore programs. These programs provide care for elderly patients following hospital discharge in partnership with Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association.
- Reducing the rate of hospital-acquired pressure ulcers by more than half, which has resulted in improved care and safety, as well as a cost savings of more than \$350,000.
- Reducing patient wait times and improving access in the Endoscopy unit by increasing the percentage of case changeovers conducted in less than five minutes. This improvement also resulted in \$250,000 in savings.
- Continuing to build on a comprehensive action plan for the Maternal Newborn and Child



Care program by introducing water births at both campuses, and expanding the midwifery and Child Development programs. As well, the hospital designated the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at the General campus a Level IIC in order to be able to provide a higher level of intensive care for sick newborns, and keep more families and their babies closer to home.

TSH also continued its longstanding track record of innovation and health system leadership this past year. Highlights include:

- Partnering with the University of Toronto on the new Centre for Integrative Medicine, which will study ways to safely and effectively integrate complementary therapies with conventional medical care.
- Expanding the hospital's interprofessional team through the introduction of seven Physician Assistants who joined three clinical programs. This was the single largest cohort hiring of Physician Assistants in Ontario.
- Being designated as a Peritoneal Dialysis Centre of Practice by the Ontario Renal Network.
- Achieving a Best Practice Spotlight Organization candidacy from the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario – the first hospital in the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN) to achieve this status.
- Receiving the 2015 National Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award from the Canadian College of Health Leaders.

Also at the AGM, TSH welcomed Nancy Evans and Robert Lawrie as two new Directors to the Board. Nancy and Robert fill vacancies created when Bonni Ellis and Brad Sinclair left the Board earlier this year.

Nancy Evans is Vice President of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement at the Electrical Safety Authority. Her governance experience includes serving as Chair of the Board of the Frontier College Foundation, which supports Canada's leading literacy organization.

Robert Lawrie is Chairman of the Hawk Capital Group, an independent investment bank operating in Canada and throughout Europe. He trained as a lawyer, practicing in Canada and the U.S. Robert served as a Director of The National Ballet of Canada for more than a decade, and was previously a Director of The Leacock Foundation in Toronto.

"Bonni and Brad have both demonstrated an exceptional commitment to their roles and to our hospital, and we thank them for their service," says Janet.

"We feel fortunate to be able to add such incredibly qualified individuals as Nancy and Robert to our highly skilled Board complement. Our Board is committed to good governance by ensuring a broad range of professional backgrounds and competencies are represented."

More information on the TSH Board, including brief biographies on all of the Directors, can be found at www.tsh.to.

THE SCARBOROUGH HOSPITAL RECEIVES 2015 NATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARD

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) has received the 2015 National Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award from the Canadian College of Health Leaders (CCHL).

The CCHL's National Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award honours a forward-thinking health care organization that has demonstrated leadership in creating and promoting diversity and inclusion to improve the environment for its employees, and to better service customers/patients and the community.

"Congratulations to the entire team for this wonderful recognition," says Janet Dalicandro, Board Chair, TSH. "The Scarborough Hospital is proud to be an inclusive organization which reflects the diverse community we serve."

"Our hospital has long realized the importance of improving the patient care experience by addressing the unique needs of our patients," adds Robert Biron, President and CEO, TSH. "Over twenty years ago, we were one of the first hospitals in Ontario to dedicate a department and a director to meet the needs of our diverse

community.

"In 2009, we built this commitment into our Vision, to be recognized as Canada's leader in providing the best health care for a global community. This Vision challenged us to expand our concept of diversity beyond the typical boundaries of culture and ethnicity, and to ensure that equity and inclusion were an integral focus for our organization and a part of every aspect of our work."

This steadfast dedication has contributed to a great number of successful initiatives, including:

- The opening of the hospital's innovative Global Community Resource Centre in 2012, launched in partnership with 14 community agencies, to empower patients and families with increased health literacy and access to community services;
- Leading more than 1,000 community outreach sessions since 2009 to help the community better understand their health care options, navigate services, and provide input on hospital programs and services;
- Implementing a dynamic educational

- curriculum for staff and physicians around diversity and inclusion, including mandatory training for management on how to lead a diverse workforce;
- Supporting diverse maternal care by allowing mothers to give birth their way, according to their preferences, customs, and beliefs, as well as providing all midwives practicing in Scarborough with privileges at TSH;
- A Chronic Disease Prevention Model that provides an equitable approach to how care should be delivered based on each patient's distinct needs;
- Improving care for seniors through a number of community partnerships and programs designed to enhance the transition process from hospital to home and avoid future hospital readmissions;
- Engaging in a number of academic research studies to help the hospital better understand how to deliver care to a diverse community; and,



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Key health equity questions in the hospital's patient satisfaction survey to identify barriers patients may encounter in accessing services.

"The Scarborough Hospital's staff, physicians, and volunteers truly display a passion for delivering outstanding care that is sensitive, respectful, and responsive to the needs of everyone at their hospital and we are delighted to be able to present them with the 2015 National Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award," says Ray Racette, MHA, CHE, President and CEO, CCHL. The National Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award is part of a National Awards Program run by CCHL. The 2015 award recipients were honoured at the CCHL's National Awards Gala on June 14.

A FATHER'S DAY GIFT SIX YEARS IN THE MAKING

For Kajendren Suvarmarajah, this Father's Day – and every Father's Day from now on – will be extra special.

On June 21, Kajendren's first child – a baby boy – was born at exactly 51 minutes after midnight at The Scarborough Hospital's (TSH) General campus.

"I'm just happy, so so happy," says Kajendren.

Kajendren's wife Janitha began experiencing contractions at about 3 a.m. on June 20 and the couple finally came to the hospital at about 4 p.m. that afternoon. Baby boy Kajendren, as he is known for now until the couple decides on a name, arrived safe and sound in the wee hours Father's Day weighing in at a healthy 7 pounds 5 ounces.

Besides being born on such an exceptional day, he is also a very special gift for another reason. The couple had been trying to conceive for six years and Janitha had miscarried once.

"It was very difficult going six years without a baby," admits Janitha.

Kajendren adds that the look on his wife's face when their son was born was "one of pure joy."

Another happy coincidence for these north Scarborough residents – or perhaps an omen of their child's impending due date – was the date of Janitha's baby shower; Mother's Day.

In addition to being overjoyed with the birth of their child, the couple also has high praise for their Obstetrician Dr. Coomarasamy Kirupanathan and the entire team in the General campus Family Maternity Centre.

After such an incredible and heartwarming birth experience, Kajendren and Janitha are now looking forward to introducing their new baby to his grandmothers, great-grandmothers and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

For more information on TSH's Maternal Newborn and Child Care program and the Family Maternity Centres, visit www.tsh.to.



EMBRACING SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS CARE THROUGH THE PATIENT JOURNEY



It's no coincidence that The Scarborough Hospital's (TSH) Spiritual and Religious Care department provides nearly 30,000 patient visits annually. After all, spiritual and religious care has contributed to improving patient outcomes time and time again. It is part of the holistic health care approach taken by TSH.

"Spiritual and religious care becomes particularly important in times of crisis, when patients are trying to navigate from a place of fear or worry, to a place of meaning and peace," says Ajith Varghese, Manager, Spiritual and Religious Care, TSH. "When patients and their families are struggling to cope or begin to question their existence based on their values and beliefs, we help them to find the answers

to their questions, from within themselves."

Sebastian Lobo, a patient with stomach cancer, knows first-hand the impact that spiritual and religious care can have on a person's mind and soul.

Sebastian had 80 per cent of his stomach removed two years ago. In the time since, he has been managing his cancer by taking care of himself and attending all his doctor's appointments. Everything was relatively fine until a recent infection penetrated his weakened immune system (which was undergoing chemotherapy) resulting in a fever, complete with shaking and chills. Sebastian came into the hospital to be treated for the infection.

Throughout his treatment, Sebastian, who, along with his wife,

is Roman Catholic, has relied on his faith in God to stay positive through difficult experiences.

"Faith is important, very, very important. It's what keeps me alive," says Sebastian. "Faith in God brings relief and comfort. When you have hope in the Lord, things will always turn around."

He credits TSH's Spiritual and Religious Care department with helping him cope as well.

"Spiritual care helps you cope with the challenges (that come with being sick). It is not easy – you must have faith," he says. "My wife met a hospital chaplain one day, and from that time, many Christian chaplains have prayed over me. Having someone to talk to (at the hospital) was a good thing."

The Spiritual and Religious Care department works with patients from all walks of life and religions – whether Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Traditional (Aboriginal) Spirituality, Secular Humanist, or those who are spiritual in nature but do not identify with a particular organized religion.

A wide range of support is available including a Mourning Room at each campus, prayer mats and chanting machines, ecumenical/multi-faith worship services, bereavement and perinatal bereavement programs, memorial services, grief and individual support, and more. This care is important in facilitating a sense of healing, closure, and peace for patients and family members.

"I recall a patient who passed away a few years ago," says Varghese.

"He had a beaded bracelet on his wrist. His family requested we pay special attention at the morgue to not remove the bracelet, as he believed the beads would connect him to his ancestors. We helped to ensure his wishes were respected."

The department has also built a strong alliance with its community and calls on local faith community

"Spiritual and religious care becomes particularly important in times of crisis, when patients are trying to navigate from a place of fear or worry, to a place of meaning and peace."

leaders and community clergy to assist in providing faith sensitive services, and on-call community clergy, as required.

"We appreciate the unique ministry offered by our local faith community leaders," says Varghese. "They offer our patients and families the rituals, rites, and cultural sensitivity that can only be provided by leaders in those communities."

In addition, TSH would like to extend a warm welcome to three new chaplains, Pamela Bauer, Teresa Lai, and Ann Muhia, who are joining the Spiritual and Religious Care department this summer.

For more information on receiving culturally sensitive spiritual care for yourself or a loved one, please visit www.tsh.to.

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Many excellent government programs still underused by Tamil elders

Healthy communication with other community members is now easier than ever

By: Andrea Shanmugarajah



Moving across the world to a vastly different country can be a daunting experience, as many Tamil Canadians know. It means learning a new language, a new culture, and a new way of living. Integration into a new society can be a difficult process; however, there are resources available to make the transition smoother that will be discussed in this article.

While moving across continents to a new life is challenging at any age, it is especially difficult for those who come to Canada as seniors. At present, the Tamil community of seniors in Canada is substantial. Many came here later in life, sponsored by their children. While the familial tie is a comforting factor, many of them become entirely dependent on their children, relying entirely on their children for social contact outside the home. This greatly limits their own mobility, as well as tremendously affecting the lifestyle of their children.

Because of their job or education commitments, most Tamils who immigrated to Canada must adapt to their new lifestyle quickly; they have to do whatever it takes to support themselves and their families. However, the elderly are not under the same pressure. And as such, they are less likely to learn the language, get involved within the community, or take advantage of the numerous programs that have been set up for them.

As a result, many elderly Tamils in Toronto have a very limited knowledge of how to get around the city, particularly when it comes to using public transit. Because the Tamil community is spread across the city and the difficulty of transportation, especially during the Winter months, many elderly Tamils feel isolated or confined within their own homes. This isolation is particularly hard when you remember that they come from close-knit communities in Sri Lanka, where contact with their cohorts was as easy as crossing the street. While the other members of their families go to work and school, the elderly are often left to fend for themselves in the house all day. This involuntary isolation can have adverse effects on their mental health and well-

being.

It is important for young caretakers to understand how difficult it is for the elderly to be trapped in the house. For years, we had to leave my own grandmother alone at home all day. Her contact with others was limited to family members, and only when they arrived back home. But it does not have to be that way; there are numerous programs provided by the Canadian government that are designed to assist the elderly in social domains. Many of these programs include transportation for a fee, and there are some programs that exist specifically for Tamil seniors. Knowing English is not a requirement.

One such program is Scarborough Centre for Health Communities, a large institution that addresses health and social needs. Program locations are available across Toronto, and the variety of programs offered for seniors include art classes, yoga and day trips. There are even specific social events for Tamil seniors; this is a great opportunity for them to meet each other. Unfortunately, many Tamils are not aware of the existence of these support programs. They do not take advantage of the opportunities presented to them.

If you are taking care of an elderly person, and feel that he/she is lacking social contact that would benefit him/her, I urge you to take a proactive role, and find ways he/she can become more involved in the community. Just spending a few minutes on the internet or making some calls to programs in your area is a small, but effective, step you can take towards developing a healthier and more fulfilling life for an elderly person in your family.

It is difficult for anyone to understand the impact of Alzheimer's disease until you are living with someone who is suffering from it. My grandma lived with us for my entire life, and played a huge role in my upbringing, yet now, she cannot recognize me as her grandchild. Seeing the blank face of my grandmother, indicating that she has no idea who I am, is devastating. Over the last few years, as I watched her deteriorate, simple tasks that we take for granted, such as preparing a meal, became increasingly difficult. Eventually, basic toileting became a challenge. While I could deal with having to feed and clean up after her, the hardest part of the transition was accepting that someone who had always protected and cared for me had sudden-

ly become someone I had to take care of. The change in her was so dramatic that it felt like she had become a completely different person.

For a long time, I wanted to ignore her struggles, hoping that if I closed my eyes to the changes happening right in front of me, I could prevent them from happening altogether. But, ignorance is not always bliss, and I soon realized that with a progressive disease like Alzheimer's, change was inevitable. Knowing that her condition would deteriorate gave me the strength to overcome my own fears of watching her suffer. And helping care for her only brought us even closer, and I quickly learned how much more there is to Alzheimer's disease than just the cognitive decline that people may see from the outside.

For many people, a serious disease like Alzheimer's becomes an emotional fork in the road; they can choose to turn their back on the person or they can choose to embrace them. It can be extremely easy to become dismissive and even belittling, of someone suffering from Alzheimer's disease. But ultimately, although the behaviour of the person has changed, their identity remains and their struggle with the disease does not make them any less of a person. While their memories are no longer accessible to them, they remain cherished in our own memories, and they are no less deserving of being treated with integrity and dignity.

As individuals, the decision is ours. It can be far too easy to turn our backs on those who are suffering, particularly for young people, who may consider themselves too far removed from the suffering of the elderly.

However, it is important for young people to face the challenge head on, and look on dealing with the disease as part of their own personal road to growth. Caring for my grandma has helped give me amazing insight into the struggles those diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease face, and I truly hope I can use this knowledge to help other, both the patients themselves, and those who have yet to have any first-hand experience with the disease.

Andrea Shanmugarajah

Andrea Shanmugarajah is a student at the University of Toronto, where she is currently pursuing an honours degree in Life Sciences. She volunteers with the Alzheimer's society as a champion for dementia, which she became interested in due to her own personal experiences with her grandmother. She is involved with the senior community in Toronto, and hopes to eventually pursue a career in geriatrics, whereby she can help the elderly on a daily basis.

Andrea hopes to educate others about the struggles that many elderly people may face in Toronto, and how people of all ages can work towards making the community a more accepting and compassionate place for seniors.



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WORDS OF PEACE



Beyond Words

“I talk about something very important,” says Prem Rawat, honoured around the world as an ambassador of peace. “It’s something that’s not easily explained in words, even though I’m going to have to use words to convey what I feel. Language may do a very good job at communicating many things, but there are some things that can’t be described in words. They can only be felt.”

“When it comes to little things such as trying to say how happy you are, you can only say, ‘Very happy.’ When you go to a doctor, and the doctor asks what the problem is, you can only say what hurts. How badly does it hurt? You can only say, ‘It hurts a lot.’”

One of the things that language is not good at describing, he says, is peace.

“A wise man once said that trying to describe the experience of real peace is like somebody who is mute eating and enjoying candy,” Mr. Rawat says. “There’s no way for that person to communicate how good it tastes in the mouth.”

People who don’t experience peace within themselves, he says, look for ways to define what they are looking for. Peace, they say, is the absence of war, or the absence of some irritant—a noisy neighbor or a barking dog, perhaps. These definitions start with the premise that peace is the absence of

something, when in fact it is a presence, a feeling in the heart whose absence creates a longing that can’t be filled by anything else.

Mr. Rawat has made it his mission in life to help as many people as possible find that missing feeling within themselves. It’s an experience, he says, that changes lives.

“All around the world,” he says, “I am reaching out, trying to paint a little painting of life. My palette, my brush and my colour are my words—and the challenge I have is that what I want to truly convey is way beyond the words. Yet I try. I try.”

Mr. Rawat often asks listeners to consider what Socrates meant when he said, “Know thyself.”

“If someone could only understand what the self is,” he says, “then that person would recognize what it means to be alive. Peace is a natural consequence of knowing.”

Only by looking within to obtain the self-knowledge that Socrates and many other wise men throughout the ages have talked about, Mr. Rawat says, can we find peace. It will still elude definition, but it will be felt within the heart.

“What do you need to look within?” he asks. “These eyes can see everyone else, but if you want to see yourself, you need a mirror. That’s very amazing. Your eyes can see everyone else, but they

can’t see the face that they’re on. To see that, you need a mirror.”

In the same way, Mr. Rawat says, to see the self within we need a kind of mirror.

“It’s a mirror that doesn’t show your face, but takes your focus and puts it inside. That is the way to know the self. You can have knowledge of everything else, but if you don’t have knowledge of the self, you don’t know who you are—and no matter where you go, you will always be lost. Even if you know where you are, if you don’t know who you are, you will be lost.”

“Understand that this life is a gift. Every day is a gift. Only a person who knows how to receive the gift will truly understand its value. You can give a monkey an eight-hour lecture on how precious pearls are, but he will never understand their value. You don’t need an eight-hour lecture. Learn how to turn within, and accept this gift of being alive. Accept this gift of having peace within you, and watch your life change.”

To learn more about Prem Rawat, please call
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Special Feature

SADHGURU

Sadhguru looks at how we can use our likes and dislikes to cultivate awareness, so that it seeps into every aspect of our life.

Sadhguru: Everyone is making choices, but choices made in unawareness are compulsions. Let us say you get angry right now. It is actually your choice to be angry. Somewhere, you believe that is the way to handle the situation, but the choice is made in such unawareness that it is a compulsion. It is happening compulsively on a different level. So you are living by choice, but choices are being made without awareness – unconscious choices. The whole thing is to shift into making conscious choices.

The idea of cultivating awareness is so that it slowly seeps into your life. One thing it does is, it enhances the quality of your life.

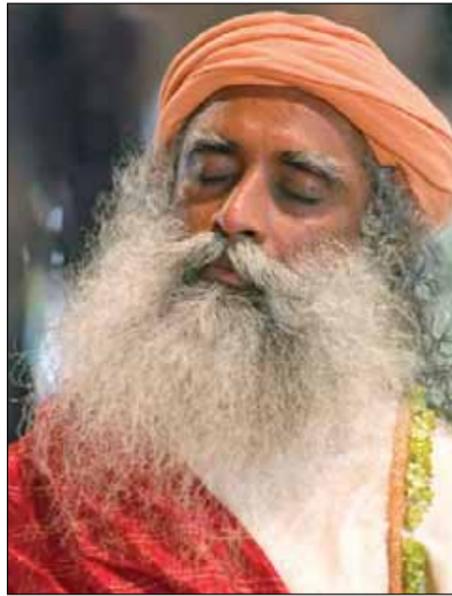
Even with a simple act like waking up in the morning, the unconscious choice is that you do not want to wake up. When the sun rises, you want to pull the sheet up a little higher over your face. This is the unconscious choice. Your physical body wants to remain in the bed for some more time. For so many reasons, it does not want to get up. There are so many aspects of life and so many limitations in your experience of life, that in many ways, unconsciously, you are not really looking forward to the day.

Let us say tomorrow, you have planned to go on a picnic. Before the sun rises, you would wake up on that day. Consciously, you have decided the previous day and you are excited. You are looking forward to tomorrow. It is a joyful experience. Otherwise, unconsciously, you try to pull the sheet higher up over your face because this light is not something you are looking forward to. With light comes today's stock prices, with light comes today's problems, with light comes the whole world into your life. You are unconsciously trying to screen yourself from that.

But now, we make a conscious choice to wake up. Even after you wake up, the unconscious choice is that you want to drink a cup of coffee. The body feels comfortable with that. But now you can make a conscious choice, "No, I will have a cold water bath and do my yogasanas."

Doing What's Uncomfortable

One reason why ascetic paths were set is simply because of this: you start doing things that are naturally not comfortable for you. If you have to do



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

something that you do not like, you can only do it consciously. There is no other way to do it. Things that you like, you can do compulsively, but things that you do not like, you can only do consciously. That is why the ascetic path. You start doing everything consciously. There is no other way to be. You are practicing how to be conscious in various situations in your life.

When the sun rises, you want to pull the sheet up a little higher over your face. This is the unconscious choice.

When you are hungry, the natural urge is to grab food and eat. But you make a conscious choice, "I am very hungry, but I am not eating." To stay away from food, there is no other choice except being conscious about it. To go and eat, you do not need consciousness, you can simply go and grab it when you are hungry. These simple things are set up in life so that you start doing things more consciously.

Maybe initially your awareness is only for half-an-hour a day, but gradually you are bringing awareness into various aspects of life. The idea of cultivating awareness is so that it slowly seeps into your life. One thing it does is, it enhances the quality of your life. But that is not everything. The main aspect is that if you can maintain awareness in various kinds of situations in life, only then will you ever become capable of being aware at that moment when you have to part with the body. Otherwise, that never arises in your life.

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, CNNI 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 volun-

teers. 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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Announcement of New Barrister & Solicitor

Mr. Vinayagamoorthy Devadas of Toronto was called to the Ontario Bar as a Barrister & Solicitor on June 24, 2015. He is originally a Lawyer cum Accountant from Sri Lanka, Chartered Professional Accountant of Ontario (CPA, CMA) and also holds a MBA from University of Colombo. He was the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Colombo Stock Exchange and was a Senior Financial Analyst at CGI Inc. He has extensive experience in law and accounting. He is the husband of Vasuki Devadas, a well-known Lawyer in Toronto, brother of Late Dr Kugadas, long time Dental Surgeon at the Jaffna Hospital and the Brother in Law of Late "Maamanithar" Nadarajah Raviraj, Attorney at Law, former Mayor of Jaffna and former Member of Parliament (MP) Sri Lanka. Mr. Devadas is an Old Royalist and an old boy of Hindu College, Bambalapitiya.



Devadas with family



Devadas with Vasuki

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HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA



The face Book Community page "Humans of Northern Sri Lanka" is a pictorial page by Thulasi Muttulingam.

Thulasi Muttulingam is a journalist based in the North of Sri Lanka. Having grown up away from her hometown of Jaffna, it is currently her mission to research and document as much of her culture and heritage as she can.

If you are similarly interested, check out more of her work at the facebook page ~ Humans of Northern Sri Lanka:

To follow the updates, "Like" the page at:

www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka "The adage, "everybody has a story to tell" is especially true of Northern Sri Lanka!

Cut off for several decades from the South, the people of the North have many unique characteristics and issues that hardly get press coverage!

Here, inspired by Humans of New York, is a small attempt to redress this - dedicated to all lovers of Sri Lanka, including Northern Sri Lanka!"

Here are few recent pictorials that featured in Humans of Northern Sri Lanka:

BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

Story of Malini



“ Did I mention I am quitting my Aid Agency job to concentrate on full time journalism? This is my last working week at ZOA. I have had the honour of working with a number of awesome colleagues with even more awesome stories to tell. Many of them could write books on their experiences of being Tamil IDPs and at the same time humanitarian workers continuing to serve the people during and after the war years. Always meant to showcase their stories on this page but somehow never got around to it. Since this is going to be my last few days with them, await a number of hurried posts on them. Hope my attempts to capture their experiences do them the justice they deserve:”



1. ZOA continued to employ us right through the last stages of the war, even through our own various displacements. Our staff, while getting displaced themselves were still working as humanitarian workers for the people.

I had been married four years when I conceived for the first time in 2008. We had been anxious to start a family but the timing could not have been more unfortunate. As the Accounts Assistant in charge of distributing salaries, I had to travel to diverse places in search of our staff to hand over their pay. My husband would take me on the back of his motorcycle through heavy shelling to do this task. I had his support throughout.

When I was about 8 months pregnant, staff in Colombo heard of the dangerous circumstances we were operating in and relieved me from these duties. They kept paying my salary though - for which I will always be grateful.

The situation had deteriorated terribly here by this time. I was scheduled to give birth by cesarean section in April 2009, but there were hardly any medical facilities available, and the makeshift hospitals were a nightmare.

I ended up on a school-desk at Matalan School to deliver my baby. They used to cart bodies by the tractor load into the school grounds, both dead and alive. I was surrounded by both dead people and injured people screaming. By this time I had reached a point where I just didn't care whether I or the baby lived or died. There was no privacy. My mother in law put some curtains around me as the operation was going on.

My baby was underweight and both he and I contracted fever right after birth. I could not walk after my C-Section so the rest of our families left us behind in the ongoing displacement, as they had to keep moving. Only my husband stayed behind with me and the baby.

2. A fisher-family with a boat came to hear of our plight and offered to take us away from the area by boat.

It was a small boat, bobbing up and down dangerously in the turbulent sea and the sea waves drenched us. I was too far gone with fever and numbness to even know what was happening but remember a lady wrapping my baby in polythene bags to keep the water away from him.

And then at mid-sea we got caught to the navy.

3. Meeting the Navy at mid-sea like that must have been frightening?

"I told you - I just literally didn't care if we lived or died. I felt no emotion whatsoever.

As it happened, the navy rescued us. They took us off the small boat and transported us in their much larger seacraft to an IDP camp in Vavuniya.

ZOA continued to pay our salaries which was a godsend. When I had recuperated enough, I heard that ZOA was working with the IDPs in Vavuniya and rejoined them at work, making my way to and from my own IDP camp.

My son was 8 months old when we left that camp."

4. "Looking back now, I remember those memories as if from a cloudy haze far away. I have blocked out most of it.

It occurred to me recently that if I have a second baby, that it will be my first actual experience of having a baby.

I really don't remember what it felt like to have labour pains, how it felt like to hold my baby, feed him, or take care of him, the first time round. I missed out on all that."

Quite a few of you wished to know how Malini's son is now.

I let her know, and she asked that this last birthday photo of his be shared with you.

Like I said, he's a bonny little boy now, the pride and joy of his parents even if a bit of a handful



Malini with son



Malini



June 26: My last working day here at our Kilinochchi site office.

The bright lettering on the roof is a remnant of the days of war. Humanitarian Agencies needed to mark themselves thus to prevent aerial bombardments and bombings.

Nevertheless the surrounding areas are filled with sealed underground bunkers, where people fled to every time an aircraft appeared. Staff still shudder whenever they hear loud cracking noises, as happens even if a mango falls on the tin roofs of the work-sheds.

The everyday horrors of war are gone; yet the memories remain. (ZOA Sri Lanka is working towards resettlement and rehabilitation of people affected by war or natural disaster since 1995 in the North and East of Sri Lanka)



ZOA





Valluvar's Views: Learning

By: JJ Atputharajah

Valluvar contends that education is vital for a leader. Whatever that is to be learned should be learned flawlessly so that the learning acquired enables him to right conduct. He also pronounces the proper way of learning. He calls it the true essence or 'meipporul'. Like Plato's philosopher king, Valluvar wanted leaders or kings to be well learned men. Numbers and letters are the discerning eyes for all mankind. They are essential to make the best of life. Numbers stand for mathematical science and letters signify language and literature. They form the metaphysical basis of thought and education. The educated persons have their faces adorned by two eyes, whereas the ignorant have two sores in their place. Education provides discerning knowledge and enlightenment. Men of learning enjoy each other's company and part with a heavy heart and sweet memories. Samuel Taylor Coleridge expresses these ideas in his statement: To meet, to know, to live and then to part is the saddest tale of many a human heart'. Those who humble themselves before the learned easily acquire knowledge as the have-nots receive from the haves. Those who do not learn remain in their despicable state.

Valluvar compares the proliferation of knowledge to an ever flowing spring. The wells in the sand abounds with water as one digs deep. So with proper education, knowledge gets wider and deeper. "Thottanaithurum manatkerni yam mantharkku kattannait thoorum arivu". The words of Valluvar are prophetic when one considers the abundance of educational opportunities available in the modern world today with large number of books and technological gadgets to provide all sorts of facilities to make vast advances in man's quest for knowledge. For the truly educated, every land and country on earth are open to them. These conditions make it mandatory for them to engage in life-long learning. A learned man will have new vistas of learning keep opening before him all the time. Poet Ponkunranar of the Sangam period said that 'all the world is my home and all men and women are my kin'. True education-life-long education - would help men to overcome religious fundamentalism, linguistic fanaticism, regional and sub-regional loyalties and even terrorist aberrations. Valluvar went further and asserted that the learning that one acquires in his current birth would stand him in good stead in all his future births. When an



educated man sees that their learning contributes to make all the world happy, he will pursue to learn more and more. They feel that the good they can do add to the joy of people around him and their environment. The idea is portrayed in a famous statement from Thirumanthiram which proclaims - "Yam

petra inbam, peruke iv vaiyakam'. (Let the world receive the joy that I have received). Valluvar concludes his thoughts on education with the view that one's education is his indestructible and outstanding wealth; nothing else is of any special or significant value or of any consequence.

GreenThru Group signs MOU to expands to Canada

Vice President, Elanko Ratnasabapathy, of GreenThru Group (Canada) / GreenThru Group Pvt. Ltd., (Sri Lanka) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of President, Ragivan Thiru, with Chairman, Dr. S.G. Samarasundara, of State Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Corporation (SPMC) in the presence of Managing Director, Mr. P. Suntharalingam, and Deputy General Manager, Mrs. Sameera Jayaweera, on Friday, 19th of June 2015 at the SPMC office in Sir John Kothalawala Mawatha, Kandawela Estate, Ratmalana.



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2015

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Special Feature

By: JJ Atputharajah

A. The Essence of Holiness:

Holiness is indispensable in our relationship with God. God desires holy people to worship him. The main pre-requisite for good relationship with God is full surrender to his will. We are invited to be participants in the holiness of God. Nowadays people adopt the wrong methods to worship God. Some think that musical excellence will help. Others resort to various forms of articulation like raising hands and shouting. They put verses on overhead projectors and keep on shouting out so that they could be heard by God. Instruments are used in their variety to attract the attention of the congregation

reverence of demeanor, the exercise of faith, the outgoings of love are some of the components of the beauty of holiness in our worship. God does not delight in ornate architecture or expensive apparel. The only kind of beauty that the Lord cares for are our devotions.

C. The Hindu, Islamic and Buddhist View-points:

According to Hindu philosophy, holiness is an intimate personal experience of arriving at it by prayer and contemplation. It should be a sustained contemplation culminating in the inner experience through (a) prayer and meditation (b) Inner experience. A genuine seeker of holiness resorts to prayer and contemplation as the immediate means and method. His

holiness. We should praise and worship God in this magnitude of holiness. The Hebrew word for praise is 'halal': which means to shine, to celebrate. So to praise the beauty of holiness is to make a show, sing, celebrate. This is an important stepping stone to worship. In those days only the High Priest can enter the Holy of Holies of the temple. He should be a sinless person. When Jesus died on the cross the curtain that separated man from the holy of holies was torn and now when you commit your heart to Jesus, you can go straight into the holy of holies. Therefore Jesus has enabled us to worship God in the beauty of holiness. The Hebrew word for worship is 'shachah'. It means prostrate. It is the formal expression of

loyalty to the royalty of God. We have to bow down, humbly beseech, do reverence or stoop. True worship is awesome in itself. This is the essence of worshipping in the beauty of holiness. Worshipping God enhances our relationship with him. Worshipping God is not an act. It is the action from our heart in reverence to the magnificent presence of God. Praising God incessantly leads to true worship and such worship gives room for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in our midst. The road to God is well expressed in the Bible. He satisfies us completely with his words. He ensures His help for us through His words of joy, peace and life.

Beauty of Holiness

- It's importance in the act of worship

and draw people at convention meetings. These are acts done under our own power. These forms of articulate worship is meaningless as it amounts to chasing after the wind. It is somewhat like self-immolations practiced by Hindus and other religionists as a way of worship. Jesus taught us to worship in the beauty of holiness. Our worship must be a response to his handiwork. Holiness is found through our struggles and through our labour. God is not dependent on our perfection. We are dependent on his perfection. We become holy by our participation in the life of Christ. Holiness depends on our consecration or dedication to God. Our spirits should be totally committed to God. True seekers of God should be devoted to God's work. They should be partakers of divine nature through faith, virtue, temperance, patience and brotherly kindness. It is through developing the virtues of righteousness that we can aspire to be holy.

B. The Christian View-point:

The natural man is totally incapable of discerning the excellence of God. God must remove the scales from the eyes of our heart before we can understand that holiness is beautiful. The beauty of holiness is real and genuine. It is rooted in the inner man, and spreads its sanctifying influence over the entire being. Its beauty is spiritual and divine. The beauty of holiness is everlasting and differs from all the attractions of the world. The fruit of the spirit will never lose its bloom. The beauty of holiness is satisfying. All the attractions of the world will fade away. Man is more than a material creature and he needs something more than material things to meet his needs. It is the things of the spirit that can give him real satisfaction. Therefore we need a closer walk with God. The beauty of holiness is glorifying to God. We should separate ourselves from all that is displeasing to him. Godliness is to the soul as the light is to the world. God delights in the loveliness of inward purity and outward sanctity. Sincerity of heart, fervour of spirit,

main concern is a whole-hearted dedication and contemplation. The guidance of a competent guru ensures the expeditious realization of the goal. Meditation is an effective means of entering into the cave of one's heart and experiencing there in the supreme reality. The age-old methods of yoga enhances the intensity and efficacy of the practice of contemplative meditation. The techniques of certain bodily postures (Asna) and regulated breathing (pranayama) facilitates prolonged absorption of the Divine. The other proven means of divine communion is the practice of Japa that is the repetitive oral or mental prayer with faith, love and attention of a divine name or of a sacred formula (mantra). Through continued and devout repetition of it thoughts become steady and settled on the meaning of the name or mantra, the mind and the heart, sentiments and desires converge and finally one gets immersed in the peace and joy of the Divine. A Tamil poet referred to the love of God when he wrote, "Ullak Kamalamady uttamanar venduvathu" which means it is heart of the devotee that the Almighty desires". Yes God wants full surrender ('saranakathy') to his will and that is what is expected in the exercise of worship. Islamic spirituality is based on internalizing the spiritual ritual found in Islamic life and practice which makes a person to respond to God's grace with faith and love and to do God's will in all things. Buddhism asserts that perfection or holiness could be attained only through diligence. It advocates salvation and piety without involving a belief in God. The only sure test is holiness.

D. Holiness-as harbinger of Joy, Peace & Life:

The Bible repeatedly gives the idea that we should worship God in the beauty of holiness. In Psalm 29: Verse 1-2 and 2nd Chronicles 16:29 it says, "Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. The Hebrew word for beauty is 'hadarah'. It means splendor, honour, comeliness, excellency, glory and majesty. It is a wonderful way of expressing God's

Jaffna YMCA Celebrates 125th Anniversary

The Jaffna YMCA was established in 1880 by Sir William Twynam in 1880 who was the Government Agent at the time. He also served as its first president. The building was first located in front of the Christ Church in Main Street but was shifted to various buildings until it was installed at the current location at Chundikuli. The foundation stone for the current building was laid by the first Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Hon. D.S. Senanayake on the 26th January 1952 and was declared open December 1962 by Ms. Frances E Wills, Ambassador of the US. YMCA always focussed its activities on the strengthening of spirit, mind and body of the youth. It conducted sports tournaments, workshops and seminars with these ideals as hallmarks. It was of great help especially the young men and students who lived in the neighbourhood. Moreover it provided rental facility to young men from other parts of Sri Lanka who chanced to come here on occasions.

The Jaffna YMCA was one of the first nongovernmental organizations which facilitated repair and rehabilitation after the 1983 riots. It was instrumental in the construction of 67 houses at Iyakkachchi which was later enriched with Preschool, community center and playground. After the 1995 ethnic strife the YMCA was actively engaged in relief and rehabilitation work. It went through several periods of neglect and exodus but took up the challenge of rebuilding of damaged YMCA building. In spite of several hardships it faced during the ethnic crisis it continued to carry out its good services. The YMCA has a management body of 15 Board of Directors. The main areas of service be-



ing hostel, building maintenance, beautification, sports, shops, religious work, HIV-AIDS, Human Rights, CRP, Y Village, Relief Work, Medical Care, Cultural Work, Youth Work, Membership and Elder's Project.

Some of its recent activities include Youth Bible Challenge in October 2014 at Kokuvil, Pre-school excursion in October to Kilinochchi to commemorate the Universal Children's Day in October 2014, Relief work when poor students were provided with bicycles in November 2014, Pre-school Teacher Training Program at Suthanthirapuram, in August 2014, Elders' Yr. End get together in December 2014 when they were given essentials worth Rs.750/-each, handing over of X' Mas gifts for orphaned children at Karunanilayam and the Scouting Camp at Mullaitivu sponsored by the Jaffna YMCA. Most of these activities were worked out with a view of providing opportunities for the deprived areas of Kilinochchi.

The Jaffna YMCA will celebrate its 125th anniversary on August 15th.

Past members or well wishers please contact: K.N.Y. Maurice / M.C. Francis

jaffnaymca@gmail.com



THE SOLITARY REAPER

With apologies to William Wordsworth

By: C. Kamalaharan

Behold him, single in the school
Yon solitary headmaster
Managing the primary school
A one man show all by himself
Maintaining his equanimity

Alighting from the rickety bus
As a new appointee on transfer
I walked along the gravel road
Skirting the picturesque fields
Endless greenery on either side

While enjoying the soothing breeze
Came drifting a mellifluous song
What a voice for the rustic setting
Overflowing with sweet melody
As time piece for the peasants

Entering the school premises
I was overwhelmed to see
The headmaster as lead singer
And the students in the chorus
As they sang with open throats

The song, a salutation to Mother Tamil
'Vaalka Nirantharam Vaalka Tamil Moli..'
Ending in 'Engal Tamil Moli Engal Tamil...'
Stirred my soul to a blissful mood
Causing goose pimples in my skin

At dawn he goes from gate to gate
Advising parents to send truants
Without fail to school
And maintain the average attendance
That prevents closure of the school

Filling drinking water in the tank
Arranging free mid-day meal
Are his other usual activities
In spite of all these busy schedules
He is in office sharp at eight

What a solitary reaper he is!
Steadfast in serving the school
His selfless service and the song
Even now in my heart I bore
Long after I left the school

*'The situation and the incident
described are real'*



AS THE SONG GOES "FRINGED WITH RICH MAHOGANIES"



By: Gobikrishna

The transition, by courtesy of the brand new railway tracks, from gut-wrenching lurches to a smooth rhythmic trot, heralded the entry into the Tamil heartland. The greenery giving way to arid landscape, studded with hardy palmyra trees; dreary houses demarcated by cajan fences; emaciated beings on bullock carts heaped with coconut husks, spilling all over but suspended in the air all at once, hauled by equally emaciated bulls in yoke. Drying ponds trodden by ever-so-patient egrets; a few paltry green blades of tall grass, against flaxen backdrop, fluttering in the morning

wind. Coconut estates, paddy fields with lone palmyra, barren and prairie lands came and went at a kaleidoscopic speed and when ennui began to set in, the train pulled into the brand new station at Jaffna. A tuck-tuck whisked me along the hospital road and in a jiffy the familiar mahogany trees, though sparse now, loomed in front, backtracking my thoughts down memory lane.

Sea breeze swept over the rows of vintage houses, cooling down sultry verandas, swaying the areca nut and coconut trees alike, while carrying the fragrance of jasmine and frangipani, to face the formidable opponent in the majestic mahogany. Upon meeting, the giants simply rustled in its

company. Seeds ejected from the canopy parachuted down, each swirling toward its spawning ground with misplaced hope. Thrown into the mix of evergreen mosaic was the white stone steeple, belonging to St. John the Baptist church. The toll of the church bell free of muezzin's cry was not for prayers, muffling and mingling with that of a Hindu temple from afar. The signature shimmy in response to the ferocious gale foreshadowed the storm, brewing on the horizon. And the tight-knit trees, having concealed the overcast sky by their overarching expanse, formed a guard of honor to the forthcoming monsoon season. The Damien in me peered through the thicket to get a

glimpse of the spire, fearing the impossible, that was the uprooting of the lightning rod--came crashing down, in the movie Omen.

Or, at twilight, on Christmas Eve, a glance at the grey sky, piercing the canopy, with trepidation, fearing the appearance of Scrooge's partner shackled and floating above, as in the late principle Mr. Anandarajan's preamble for "A Christmas Carol". The freewheeling galavanting, among the boughs of the ethereal forest in the old park, once a year during Jaffna scout jamboree, was the closest I have ever come to experiencing spirituality.

Mahogany trees, for their ubiquity, I daresay, were taken for granted. And I could not conjure up the school without them. Or so I thought until my recent visit to the school and the old park. Alas, what became of them?; it seemed the civil war could not spare anything, even the trees. Or, was it an excuse for marauding? Concrete jungle had crept into the park that was once bursting at the seams with the precious trees. And the ones left behind on the fringes looked disheveled and decapitated. Disenchanted, I walked through the park and the school's vicinity, and at last I found the missing element; the sense of awe and spirituality was among the victims.

The song "fringed with rich mahoganies" appears ironically somewhat appropriate now, and I hope and pray it won't become an absurdity for posterity.

A WONDERFUL TEACHER

I have a great teacher named Mr. Curtis. I think he has all the qualities to be a perfect teacher and I'll tell you why.

Mr. Curtis is a very sensitive teacher. On the first day of school, he told everybody, "If you are being bullied, tell me immediately!" A few years ago, a boy in his class wrote in his journal that a group of girls were bullying him. Mr. Curtis showed his journal to the principal right away! The principal talked to the girls and told them to stop. Those girls have been very kind since. Whenever someone gets hurt, Mr. Curtis is right there for the rescue!

Mr. Curtis wants everyone to get into a good university and have a great job. He realizes that many people in his class haven't been pushed the way they are today! For example, last year there was a girl in his class who was a B-writer in language. Mr. Curtis pushed her to be a good writer. It took days, it took weeks, it took months, but finally she showed all she's got! Now, she

is in grade seven and she gets an A in writing! She came back and thanked Mr. Curtis. It was worth all the hard work!

Mr. Curtis teaches us in a unique and understanding way. Most of the time, he lets us work in partners. He wants us to socialize by talking, learning, and having fun! Instead of just doing boring, old math worksheets all the time, we play math games! Everyone has fun and improves day by day. In Language, we have to read every day and record it. You may think it is boring, but... If you do this every single day, he'll give you free books and might spend money to buy you something. How cool is that? Science is always incredible too, because we often get to watch videos about it! Having a teacher like Mr. Curtis is excellent, especially if he is going through all this trouble for his students!

Name: Majuri Ganeswaran with Jim Karigiannis, Toronto Councillor and former MP for Toronto-Agincourt. Grade: 6 Prize: 3rd Place - Intermediate

Sixth article in a series of award winning articles presented for the RG Education Centres' essay competition by students and delivered at their annual celebrations held during year end, 2014.



Mr. Curtis is a very sensitive teacher. On the first day of school, he told everybody, "If you are being bullied, tell me immediately!" A few years ago, a boy in his class wrote in his journal that a group of girls were bullying him. Mr. Curtis showed his journal to the principal right away! The principal talked to the girls and told them to stop. Those girls have been very kind since. Whenever someone gets hurt, Mr. Curtis is right there for the rescue!

I don't think you can find a better storyteller than Mr. Curtis! Once, when he was six years old, he was running on the street because a bully was chasing him. As he ran, a car hit him and he was under the car. Luckily, he was not hurt and didn't have a single scratch. Another story, he told us was the time he saved himself and his sister from a stranger. At that time, it was twelve o'clock midnight. He was with his older sister in his house alone and they both were kids. His sister was listening to the radio and then he heard a knock on the door. A stranger was knocking and said "I'm here with pizza!" Mr. Curtis knew no one would bring pizza right now at such a late time. Even if his parents weren't home, he clearly yelled, "Dad, Dad wake up, I want you to talk to this man right away!!! When the stranger heard that, he left and never returned. These are amazing stories he told the class! When he tells stories, they come to life!

Mr. Curtis is a really funny teacher! He laughs, sings, dances and enjoys his life as a kid, like us! To make us smile, he tells us funny jokes! When it comes to giving up and being sad, you wouldn't want to. Mr. Curtis always tries to make his students happy.

I wish to share all my great experiences with Mr. Curtis with you, but if I do, it will take years! I just want you to

know that he is so amazing. Kids still come back today to say thank you to him. Whether this teacher has students who are 30 or 11 years old, almost everyone comes back and thanks him. Unfortunately, he will retire in 6 or 7 years, but if you were ever in his class, you will experience the same joy I get from him.



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At RG Education Centers, we believe that all individuals have the potential to excel when given the proper materials and attention. RG Education Centers empowers students to reach their full potential by helping them master the skills and knowledge they need for success at a higher level.

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SCARBOROUGH SHOCKED BY THE BLINDFOLD READING THROUGH THIRD EYE AWAKENING

Can Blindfolded Kids see by Getting Their Third Eye Activated?

By: Uthayan Thurairajah

A nine-year-old girl, Yogamata can read English books and business cards, recognize colors of the audience attire, and play games with blindfolded. The human miracle girl gave this demonstration in Washington DC on May 12, 2015, and in Scarborough on June 15, 2015. All the readings were performed using double blindfolds and eye pads to ensure that the readings were foolproof and credible. The audience who have witnessed the whole event were stunned including media personnel, prominent doctors, scientists, professors, businessmen, lawmakers and lawyers, some of whom called her a genius.



Yogamata

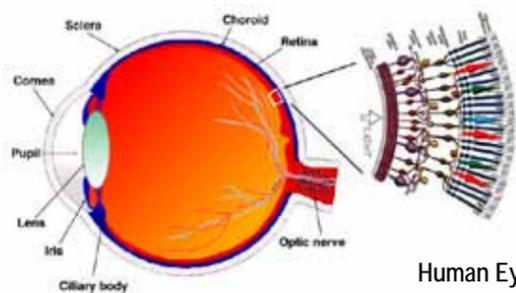
An organizer called this is an ancient secret revealing the technique on how to awaken the third eye. She has been practicing this science of awakening the third eye over the last few months. There is no religious and spiritual activity during the activation. It was totally natural, relax, and scientific, and no meditation is used.

CAN WE SEE THROUGH OUR NOSE?

Can we eat food with our nose or smell with our ears? No, of course, we can't! Each of our senses is designed uniquely. We smell with our nose, hear with our ears, taste with our tongue, feel with our hands and skin, and see with our eyes. We use our eyes to see the sight more than any other sense. We see because our eyes and brain are work together to make pictures of what is in front of us.

The brain and eyes are the body's most complex organs, containing more than 100 billion neurons, each of them in chemical and electrical exchange with up to 10,000 other neurons. The brain capacity to process information is incredible. We cannot see without light. It is a very complex system it has lenses, retina, photoreceptors (Rods & Cons), optic nerves, visual cortex, etc. Scientist still does not have complete understanding of our visual system.

CAN YOU SEE THROUGH OUR THIRD EYE?

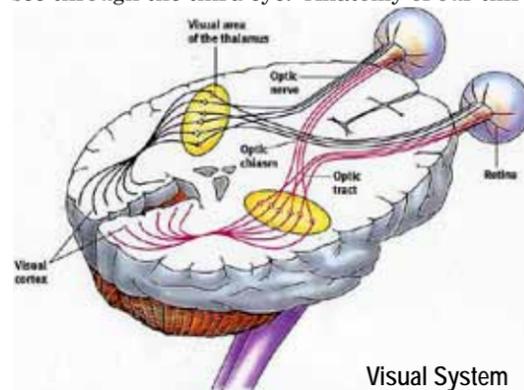


Human Eye

Vision is perhaps the greatest gift to us. The term vision is not simply restricted to the 'act of seeing' but also implies perception and interpretation by the brain. For example, a child can see all things but cannot recognize them due to lack of understanding. The learning process gradually enables him/her to perceive, identify and visualize things. What we see with the eyes is passed on as electrical signals to the brain, and it is the interpretation by the brain that is more important. Similarly, a developed mind has the eye of Inner consciousness or 'Third Eye', which enables us to see internally. It symbolizes a vision of one's self and surroundings. For true vision, the inner eye also needs to be developed through awareness, consciousness and understanding of our inner self.

The third eye story of Lord Shiva is quite interesting. Once, Goddess Parvati playfully closed Lord Shiva's eyes with her palms. The universe was enclosed in total darkness. Lord

Shiva opened his third eye to provide light and energy to the world. Hindus believe that 'third eye' can be activated only after years of meditation. The right and left eyes represent activities in the physical world while the third eye symbolizes spiritual wisdom and power. The third eye or Ajna chakra stands for higher consciousness and allows us to understand the real world. I do not see anywhere in the Hindu literature say that we can see through the third eye. Anatomy of our third eye



Visual System

is entirely different than our eyes.

IS THIS A MAGIC?

The blindfold reading is known in the magic trade as the "Blindfold Peek". This was written in 1740 by Gilles-Edme Guyot in his French classic *Nouvelles Recreations*. The Blindfold Act took center stage in 1816 when British psychic Margaret M'Avoy apparently used her fingertips to see colors and words, and Washington Bishop's blindfolds drive with his horse drawn a cart. Magicians have been using this and other techniques for centuries. It makes extremely difficult for non-magicians to catch them out, as some of the methods can indeed be well-planned and hidden.

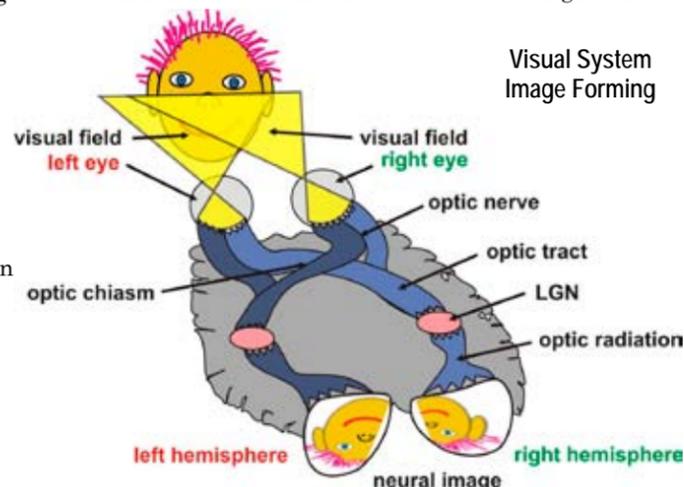
IS THIS A CHEATING?

There are several cheating incidents were reported in other countries. Kids who were peeking at things held under the nose through the gap between the blindfold and cheeks. This type of issue needs a thorough investigation by some organization that is looking after the children's welfare.

If a child who has gone through this training, he/she has most probably been brainwashed or scared into maintaining secrecy. At best, they may have been told that this is a magic trick that they need to keep secret; at worst, they may be threatened with dire consequences and forced into an agreement. The moment you expose their forced lie, they will most probably break down.

IS THIS AN EXTRA SENSORY PERCEPTION?

Yogamata's mother placed the blindfold. Yogamata refused to read behind the head but told the audience that she is currently undergoing the practice to see behind the head. The anchor said that she could read in the dark, but that never happened! I was attempting to talk to her right after the program. The very sympathetic commentator told me that she was a small girl and



Visual System Image Forming

hence should not be subjected to any personal discussion.

Yogamata identifies objects, read material without any visual stimulus from her. The audience witness that no such visual stimulus will reach the eyes of the subject since eyes and forehead completely covered. It is interesting that she could only read or identify



Loard Siva Third Eye

the object that is familiar to her. Therefore, she must have a continuous visual communication link with the Brain. How the information pass to the Brain if she is using her brain to understand the visual information? The light reflected from the object reaches eyes and form an image on the retina. The retina has photoreceptors to detect colors and visual information pass to the visual cortex, but the blindfold entirely avoids the visual information pass to the retina. According to the science and the general understanding, how it is possible the visual information transmits to the third eye. There is no justification or proper explanation other than this so called miracle.

The blindfold reading can be very well proved in a scientific lab or at a doctor's clinic. We can take Positron Emission Tomography (PET), EEG (Electroencephalogram), CT-scans or MRI to test the brainwave and the function of the Brain during the blindfolded reading. The blindfold reading does not have to be proved in front of the camera and public. We cannot blindly accept this without any scientific justifications or explanation.



Uthayan Thurairajah is a Senior Engineer and Associate at MMM Group with over eighteen years of experience in Electrical Engineering and Lighting field, and he also teaches in the Department of Communication and Design at Ryerson University. Uthayan is a member of several Canadian and international professional association including Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine (AIHM) and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research (APTR). He has worked on numerous multi-disciplinary lighting and electrical projects for the Ministry of Transportation, various Towns, Municipalities, Regions and others. He also has extensive research experience in 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. He is passionate about integrating science and health into the lighting design.



Tamil Literary Garden Award - 2014

By Ravichandrika

The Tamil Literary Garden, established in 2001, is a Toronto based charitable organization committed towards promoting the development of Tamil literature and studies internationally. The mandate includes the presentation of awards on an annual basis to those creative persons who have made significant contributions to the development of the Tamil language.

The Fifteenth annual awards function was held in Radisson Hotel on 13 June 2015 with David Bezmozgis, Canadian writer and film director as the chief guest.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Mr. B. Jeyamohan, a leading writer of Tamil fiction. Mr. Jeyamohan has made significant contributions in the last 28 years as a writer of thirteen novels, eleven short story collections and fifty essays. He has also penned scripts for Tamil and Malayalam movies titled kashoorimaan, angaadhitheru, naankadavul, neerparavai, aaru melukuvarththikal, kadal, kaaviyaththalaivan, ozhimuri and kaanchi, which were well received by movie-goers. The award was presented by Mr. David Bezmozgis. The award was sponsored by Bala Cumarasan and Vaithehi from the very incep-

tion of the organization.

In addition to the Lifetime Achievement Award, the following awards were also presented. Fiction awards went to Devakanthan for his novel 'Kanavuchirai' and to Kuna Kaviyalakan for "Nachundakadu". Non-fiction awards were given to Muthiah Nithiyananthan for his book 'Kooliththamil' and to Jeyarani for "Jaathiyatravalin Kural." The Poetry award was given to Kathirbharathi for his collection of poems 'Mesiyavukku moondru machangal'

The Award for 'Information Technology in Tamil' given in honour of Sundara Ramaswamy was awarded to

Muthiah Annamalai and the student essay contest awards were shared by Vasuki Kailasam and Yugendra Ragu-nathan. The translation awards were given to K. V. Shylaja for 'Yaarukum vendatha kan' translated from Malayalam to Tamil and Swarnavel Eswaran Pillai for his book "Madras Studios - Narrative Genre and Ideology in Tamil Cinema."

The event which was well attended by scholars and writers from Canada and abroad came to an end with a vote of thanks by Mrs. Usha Mathivanan.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)



Iyal Virudhu award received by writer Jayamohan from David Bezmozgis, Bala Cumarasan and Apsara



A section of the audience



Federal M.P. Rathika Sitsabaiesan giving the award to writer Jayamohan



Board Members of Tamil Literary Garden with writer Jayamohan



Muthiah Annamalai receiving award for IT in Tamil from Richard Jeo



Dr Swarnavel receiving award under translation category from Kumar Ratnam and V. Sornalingam



(L-R) Tharshika Ramanecharan, Sankavi Ragu-nathan, Aarthika Kumaresh, JEYAMOHAN, Kandasamy Gangatharan, Shanoo Kulam, Kulakshana Paraniyasagam, Usha Sivabalan



Writer Devakanthan receiving the fiction award from Dr Shan Shanmugavadivel and Mr and Mrs Balasunderam



Award given in memory of K. Sinnadurai to Kuna Kaviyalakan (received by proxy P.A.Jayakaran)



Award given by Margie and Vincent de Paul to Jeyarani (received by proxy Usha Mathivanan)



Award for essay given by Bahir Vivekanand, Serena and Jayaraman to Vasugi Kailasam (received by proxy Nandini)



Award for essay given by Bairavee Ranjith and Ami Vitale and received by Yugendra Ragu-nathan

MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Starting young is the best way to financial security

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

You're newly graduated, and you're making your own money for the first time. You could spend some of it on a great vacation, a new car ... or you could start investing in your investment portfolios to achieve your financial goals.

When you're a young Canadian strapped for cash, with student loans to pay off and lots of new lifestyle expenses, it's difficult to save for the future. But the experts, and the life experiences of many investors, tell us that without a doubt, starting young is the key to investing successfully for achieving your future financial goals. Even if you start small, start now – because the longer you are in the markets, the more your savings will grow over time. Check out this example:

*Mary invests \$2,000 at the beginning of each year between ages 21 and 29, for a total of \$18,000 over

your future financial needs and spend to meet your current needs. Sure, you'd like to start an investment program or add to the small investments you've already made, but there just never seems to be anything left over once you've taken care of the essentials. And in a world that runs on credit, it's too easy to carry too much debt in too many places.

But it doesn't have to be that way. A PAC – or Pre-Authorized Contribution program -- is a simple, straightforward and consistent way to make an affordable monthly payment to your investment plan, the same way you would for any of your other monthly commitments. Investing small amounts makes it easier to contribute. Ten percent of your earned income each month is recommended but you could also choose to invest weekly, bi-weekly. It's easy to do – just arrange with your bank to de-



nine years. Assuming a pre-tax return of 7 per cent, by age 65, she will have \$292,828 in pre-tax savings.

* Lynn also invests \$2,000 at the beginning of each year with the same pre-tax returns but starts at age 30. To get near Mary's savings total of \$292,828, Lynn will need to invest nearly four times as much -- \$70,000 over 35 years.

There are so many needs compete for your resources. You are constantly making decisions about spending and saving. You save and invest to meet

duct a specified amount from your savings or chequing account on a regular basis and contribute it to your Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) or non-registered portfolio. You choose an amount that is debited from your bank account and invested on your behalf on a regular basis, such as each month. You are free from scrambling to buy lump sum investments at irregular intervals in an attempt to 'buy low and sell high', your automated investments

David Joseph, M.A., CFP, CLU. Financial Consultant
Investors Group Financial Services
 300-200 Yorkland Blvd. North York, Ontario M2J 5C1
 david.joseph@investorsgroup.com
Tel: (416) 491-7400 Ext. 674, Toll Free: 1-888-491-7415 Fax: (416) 491-7416
 Website: <http://www.investorsgroup.com/en/david.joseph/home>

take place on a regular basis.

The concept of "buy low and sell high" sounds attractive, but is difficult to follow due to the unpredictable nature of short-term market prices. To take advantage of these changing prices, one of the simplest yet most effective investment strategies you can use is known as dollar cost averaging. By making a commitment to investing a smaller amount on a regular schedule, dollar cost averaging can help you lower your average cost by purchasing more investment units at lower prices, and fewer units at higher prices.

risk and then, through proper analysis, determine an appropriate mix of assets that will potentially provide the highest return that corresponds to the desired amount of risk you are willing to withstand.

As the appetite for a potentially higher return increases, so does the corresponding investment risk. That is because obtaining a higher return usually involves a greater emphasis on equity type investments that are characteristically more volatile in terms of price fluctuation. For the more aggressive investor, a portion of their equity investments may focus on emerging markets or a particular industrial sector. Through a strategic asset allocation approach, it is possible to combine a series of fixed-income securities and equities together in a portfolio that will exhibit less volatility than most of the individual constituents — provided every security included complements the diversity of the portfolio's content. Using this approach and resisting the temptation to "time" the market by temporarily concentrating holdings in any one area will not completely remove the risk of financial loss, but it can help you to build personal wealth without taking undue risk.

Do your research. You need to be comfortable with your investments and the best way to do that is to become knowledgeable. Talk to a financial planner. Even if you only have a little money to invest, a financial planner will be happy to help you. It's in their interest to establish a relationship with young investors who will be clients for a long time.

For your best financial outcome, start investing early and develop good financial habits. That way, you'll have more options for how you want to live your life from here to retirement ... and beyond.

Disclaimer:

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

And here are some investing tips to get you going:

Achieving your investment goals requires patience and a keen understanding of how you would like to achieve those goals. Designing your investment portfolio should not only consider the rate of return you wish to achieve but also the investment risk you may encounter. Generally, the desire for a specific investment return should be secondary. The primary focus should be on identifying your comfort level with



6th Annual South Asian community festival 2015 - Toronto

6th Annual South Asian community festival was held on Saturday June 6th, 2015 at Stephen Leacock Collegiate Institute. Numerous South Asian Students have performed various cultural dance, fashion show and singing and instrumental performances. Grade twelve students of Stephen Leacock Collegiate Institute named Gobika Sithamparanathan and Shahbaz Balouchi were the Master of Ceremony of the event. Many Toronto District School Board Directors and members have been a great support for this event.



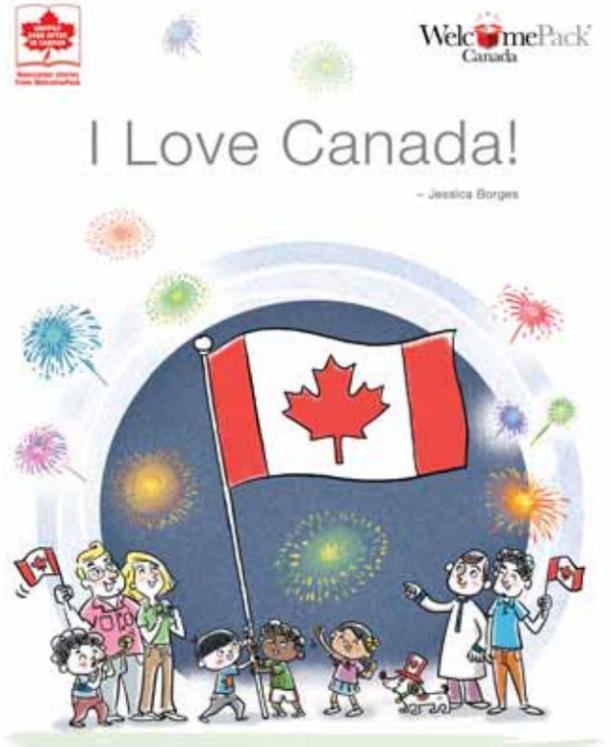
'I Love Canada' Celebration Inspires Newcomers And All Canadians To Express Their Love For Canada

For generations, Canada has been welcoming people from all over the world to her shores. This Canada Day, WelcomePack Canada created a platform for the nation to get together and proclaim their love for Canada by clicking the 'I Love Canada' button on WelcomePack-Canada.com/MyCanada. The goal is to generate 50,000 'loves' for Canada by July 1, Canada's 148th birthday. The counter has already started rolling as the love pours in.

Visitors to the site are also enjoying and sharing a specially created Canada Day eBook called 'I Love Canada', a story that weaves together Canada's history, geography, achievements, and values, leaving one with a deep appreciation of belonging to this great land. An inspiring eCard applauding the values Canada stands for - freedom, peace, love for nature, and love of diversity, is being sent on as Canada Day greetings. There is also an 'O Canada Contest' with 'Canada Rocks' sippers and special limited edition Canada Flag coin sets to be won.

"Canada is a wonderful land that attracts people from all over the world. Whether we have come here recently, or been here for generations, this country deserves our love and loyalty," says Andrew Srinarayan, Vice President, WelcomePack Canada Inc.

About WelcomePack



WelcomePack Canada is a newcomer program, which welcomes new immigrants to Canada, along with over 30 leading Canadian brands. It helps them settle, fostering a sense of belonging to the Canadian way of life. Also included in the WelcomePack gift box is an informative magazine that provides helpful settlement information, and thousands of dollars worth of savings.

After a successful first year of launch, WelcomePack is gearing up for their second year of reaching out to newcomers to Canada with their 'Welcome To Remember' initiative. New immigrants who have arrived on or after January 1, 2013, can pick up their free WelcomePack gift box from over 60 locations in the GTA. More information is available on www.WelcomePackCanada.com

சண்டிலிப்பாய் ஐக்கிய மன்றம் - கனடா
Sandilipay United Society - Canada

July 12th

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கனடா குதூகலம் 2015

Sunday, July 12th, 2015 @ 10.00 AM

Venue/இடம்: L'Amoreaux Park (Birchmount / McNicoll)
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 416-321-6750
 or e-mail: sandilipayug1212@hotmail.com

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GENIE SISTERS
SAMAYAL
SANTHAI



Welcome to our recipe corner! We sisters will entice you with recipes that we have fallen in love with and teach you a little Tamil along the way, as all the ingredients will have their Tamil names (where possible), as well. Both of us love to cook and we have developed very different styles. Niranjini has a very refined palate and cooks more contemporary world cuisine with an Asian touch. Rajini is a seasoned homemaker who loves making traditional dishes for her friends and family. Follow us on Instagram: @ninjaeatsfood and @tamil_food

Eat more, learn more!

Sisters Niranjini Thirunesan (left in photo) and Rajini Nathan live in London and are of Sri Lankan heritage. Niranjini is a graduate in Human Biology, and has a clear passion for food. You can find more of her recipes on her blog www.ninjaeatsfood.wordpress.com Rajini has a background in psychology and travels the world with her husband Victor and daughter Azaaryah. Their travels are detailed at www.myreluctanttravels.wordpress.com

PAPRIKA & ROSEMARY CHICKEN WITH BABY COURGETTES AND SWEET POTATO MASH

This recipe is not something you will typically find on a Tamil dining table. However, we try most of our recipes on our Amma, who cannot live without her rice and curry. For this recipe, she has given us her thumbs up, so we want to share it with you!

The humble sweet potato has a multitude of benefits that are often disregarded. Orange-fleshed sweet potato is one of nature's most highly abundant sources of beta-carotene, which increases the bioavailability of Vitamin A in the blood. Vitamin A, otherwise known as retinol, is essential for supporting vision health and the immune system. It is important to include 3-5g of fat in a meal with sweet potato, to ensure the uptake of beta-carotene is significantly increased. This is as simple as using ¼ tbsp of extra virgin olive oil in a single meal. The recipe not only includes enough fat, but also ensures a delicious way to consume sweet potato and baby courgettes, as well as staying happy and healthy!

Method: Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C for fan assisted ovens)

Wash the sweet potatoes and prick them all over, using a knife. Place them in the preheated oven for 45 minutes. Alternatively, you could cut them into medium sized pieces and boil them, until soft, to reduce cooking time. You could also steam them (use an idly/idiyappam steamer if you don't have a conventional steamer), to ensure they retain as much taste and nutrients as possible.

Whilst waiting for the sweet potatoes to cook, cut a piece of greaseproof/parchment paper. Make sure the greaseproof paper is long enough to fold over. Onto the greaseproof paper, pour ¼ tbsp of extra virgin olive oil/vegetable oil and sprinkle over paprika powder, garlic powder, rosemary leaves, salt, black pepper and lemon juice. Mix together and spread across a small part of the greaseproof paper, spanning the size of the chicken breasts. Place the chicken breasts (skin side down) on top of this spread and fold the greaseproof paper over, covering the chicken breasts. Using a rolling pin, gently beat the chicken breasts, so as to flatten the breast. This will help reduce cooking time and ensure a flat, crispy skin on the chicken with maximum flavour. Leave this to one side.

Cut the baby courgettes into strips, making sure they are not too thin. If you cannot find baby courgettes, you can use a normal courgette (cut it into thirds and then into strips).

Once the sweet potatoes have around 20 minutes left to cook, heat up a griddle pan/frying pan and add the remaining ¼ tbsp of oil. When the pan is very hot, slowly place the chicken breasts, skin side down. You can use the leftover paprika and rosemary marinade of the underside of the chicken breasts at this point, but this is optional. Leave the chicken breasts to cook for around 10-12 minutes, without turning. After 10-12 minutes, turn the chicken breasts over. You should be able to see a nice, crispy skin on the chicken. Place the strips of baby courgettes around the chicken breasts, ensuring that the strips of courgettes do not touch the chicken. After 3-4 minutes, turn the baby courgette strips over. Another 5-8 minutes later, the chicken should be cooked. This is dependent on the size of the chicken breasts, so do make sure it is thoroughly cooked (when you pierce the chicken, the juices should run clear).

Remove the chicken breasts and let it rest to one side. Toss the courgettes in the pan, to soak up all the flavour the chicken has left behind, and turn the heat off.

When the sweet potato is cooked, carefully remove the skin and mash it with a fork. Place the sweet potato mash onto the middle of the plate and then add the baby courgettes on top of the mash. Carefully lay the chicken, skin side up, on top of the courgettes.

Before eating, please do take a picture and send it to us at Monsoon Journal, so we can appreciate your efforts. If you're on Instagram, upload a picture and use the hashtag #monsoonjournal. Enjoy!



Serves: 2

Ingredients:

2	chicken breasts (skin on)
10	rosemary leaves
¼	tsp paprika powder
¼	tsp garlic powder
¼	tsp lemon juice
2	pinches of black pepper powder
½	tbsp extra virgin olive oil/vegetable oil
6	baby courgettes
2	sweet potatoes
Salt	(to taste)



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Nepal Earthquake Relief Fundraiser

The Nepal Earthquake Relief Fundraiser event was organized by Markham Regional Councillor Joe Li in collaboration with the local artists from the Canada Diversity Celebration Team to raise awareness for the Nepal earthquake disaster. The event was held on Friday June 12, 2015 at the Century Palace Chinese Restaurant in Markham.

Joe Samion & Santha Tsang hosted the evening featuring 19 talented

artists who sang a variety popular of Western, Bollywood and Chinese songs. While the guests enjoyed a delicious 10 course meal, dancers entertained them with traditional Chinese performances in elaborate dance costumes.

A short documentary film was shown by our partner World Vision and Reverend Byoung Cho to illustrate the devastation of the two major earthquakes and the initiatives that are currently taking place in Kathmandu,

Nepal. Regional Councillor Joe Li far exceeded his original target of \$20,000-\$30,000 with the generous support of the community. The net proceeds raised for this humanitarian cause was over \$42,000. Mayor Frank Scarpitti sang a few Chinese songs and raised an additional three thousand dollars in donations for a net total of \$45,000 for charity.

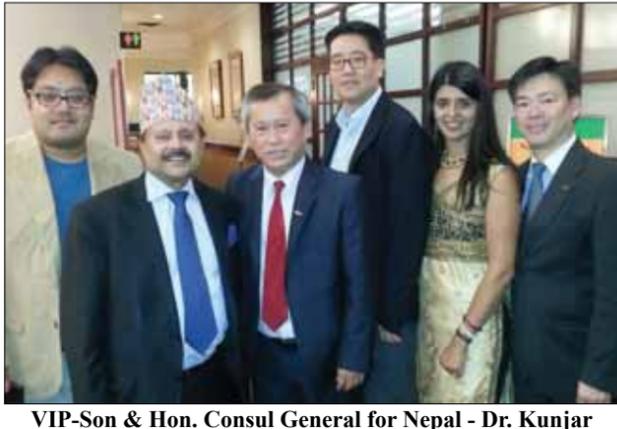
The evening was a great success and well attended with over 250 attendees

including Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong, Hon. Consul General for Nepal Dr. Kunjar Sharma, and Mr. Shome Chaurasia- Friends of Nepal.

The fundraiser event concluded with a universal prayer of hope and peace from Neera Chakravorty. Regional Councillor Joe Li is sincerely grateful to the guests and the community in coming forward and supporting the humanitarian relief efforts for Nepal.



Regional Councillor Joe Li, Hon. Consul General of Nepal - Dr. Kunjar Sharma, Reverend Byoung Cho, & Mr. Shome Chaurasia - Friends of Nepal



VIP-Son & Hon. Consul General for Nepal - Dr. Kunjar Sharma, RC Joe Li, World Vision-Reverend Byoung Cho, Executive Assistant to RC Joe Li - Neera Chakravorty, Mr. Billy Lok-President



Regional Councillor Joe Li with Reverend Byoung Cho, Canada Diversity Team - Santha Tsang, Joe Samion, Neera Chakravorty, & World Vision volunteers



Handing over the cheque to World Vision



RC Joe Li & Local Dance Group

THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA THE 2015 GANESHA FESTIVAL AT THE RICHMOND HILL TEMPLE AT 10865 BAYVIEW AVE

The annual seventeen-day for Lord Ganesha, started with an elaborate Homam and religious rituals to bring health and prosperity to all the devotees and the community followed the next day with the "Kodi etram" (raising the flag of the deity), on Monday the 18th of May, marking the commencement of the festival. For the next thirteen days there were special Nava Kalasa (Nine vessels) Abhishekham, Yaga Puja, Vasantha Mandapa Puja followed by procession of the Utsava Deity with exquisite and beautiful decoration and seated on different Vahanas each day inside the temple to the accompaniment of traditional Nadaswaram and Mirdangam music. The most eagerly awaited event of the devotees, the Theer (Chariot) festival took place with a huge crowd despite the not so great weather. This event

is something that everyone should see for themselves to believe how dedicated the thousands of devotees who come, pull the Theer around the temple. The other equally well anticipated and attended event is the "Poongavanam Utsavam" which is sponsored by all the volunteers who had spent enormous amount of their time from a week before the start to make the festival such a great event. This once again example of the success of a function thanks to "VOLUNTEERS, VOLUNTEERS, & VOLUNTEERS".

UPDATE ON THE CONSTRUCTION WORK GOING ON AT THE TEMPLE AND AN APPEAL TO THE DEVOTEES

Thanks to the generous financial contributions of devotees thus far, we are very close to completing the "Granite Flooring" of the entire inside temple



area. The next items of improvement work to start are completing the Granite Flooring of the Mandapam area followed by laying "Porcelain Tiles for flooring and walls" in the Basement and in the Kitchen as well. To make these projects come to fruition, we would like

devotees to continue to give generous donations. With the help of you all, we can not only make all these work possible quickly, but also make our temple most beautiful place of worship in the GTA and an iconic centre in the Richmond Hill Community.



In loving memory of Jeyadevi Nallasivam (nee Selvadurai) 1933 - 2015

By **Rajana Thambirajah**
(nee Sabaratnam)

Mrs. Jeya Nallasivam passed away on the 20th of March 2015 after a terminal illness in Perth, Western Australia. She had only a few weeks to say goodbye to her loving family and friends.

I came to know Jeya two decades ago when her family moved to Perth from the Northern Territory, Australia. Jeya was friendly and hospitable. I learned from her that she has taught at Chundikuli Girls' College in the early sixties well before I had attended the College and our initial conversations always circled around the many tutorial staff who taught during her time.

Both of us had the love for books and hence our relationship bloomed exchanging various books. Jeya also indicated that the local public library was holding Tamil books which made me also to raid the library. I can assure that the borrowing records would show that most of the Tamil books would have been on loans on both of our surnames.

Both Jeya and I have inherited different faiths but this did not deter our friendship and we have had many healthy conversations about our faiths. The respect she showed for other religions was most appreciable. This may have inculcated in her from her young age by her family or while mingling with people who were embracing different faiths.

Jeyadevi was born in 1933 as the youngest of three and the only girl to Jayaluxmi and Selvadurai in Malaysia. Her early childhood was affected by the Second World War as Malaya was one of the key posts for the British Empire. After the war her family returned to Sri Lanka as many of the Tamils did at that time. Jeya was 12 years old when her family settled in Colombo. She started her education at the Methodist Girls' College and continued her

undergraduate studies at the Peradeniya University in Kandy. Her speciality was Tamil and Sanskrit. She completed her degree with an excellent Bachelor of Arts (Hons). It was during her carefree university days that she was smitten by her future husband Mr. Kandasamy Nallasivam.

Jeya's first teaching post was at Chundikuli girls' College (CGC), Jaffna in the late nineteen fifties. She has tutored Tamil (and Sanskrit) for the upper secondary classes which was then called HSC. She was with the CGC tutorial staff for six years under the principals Ms Mathai and Mrs. GES. Chelliah.

Jeya married her love of her life Mr. K. Nallasivam in 1961 after seven years of courtship. Soon after her marriage the young couple settled in Colombo and Jeya continued her teaching career of over 25 years at the Rattalana Hindu College until her retirement. The couple were blessed with 2 children Chelvi and Asokan.

The happy family life of Nallasivams' was interrupted during the 1983 ethnic riots in Colombo. The family lost all of their belongings and moved to Jaffna. The resilient Nallasivams' returned to Colombo and subsequently migrated to Darwin, Australia where Jeya's brother was living. Once their daughter settled in Melbourne and son in Perth, Mr & Mrs Nallasivam also moved to Perth.

Among the Tamil community Jeya is known as "Jeya aunty" or simply aunty. Nallasivams' move to Perth was a gain for the North of the river Tamil migrants. Mr & Mrs. Nallasivam spearheaded in establishing a Tamil school in Ballajura 20 years ago. The Tamil school is still operative and Jeya has been a pillar for the initial establishment and taking Tamil classes for the children whose parents hailed from India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore and the Maldives.



Jeyadevi Nallasivam (15 March 1933 – 20 March 2015)

Nallasivams' also established a Ballajura Hindu Prayer group which has been functioning for the last 13 years. I learned from the eulogies that Jeya had hand-written all the Thevaaram for the Hindu Prayer group. She was also keen to teach new Bajans to the children by viewing the You-tube videos. Even though she had a beautiful voice to lead the bajan she always encouraged others to lead the singing wherever possible. According to the eulogies she has rendered her voice in January for a beautiful Vinayagar lyric "katpaga vinayaga kadavule poetry" written by Subramaniya Bharathiyar and that has been her swan song.

Jeya's fervour in her own faith was well displayed at her funeral services, when all the children and adults sitting around her coffin singing Bajans. I am sure that she would have been satisfied with the outcome of leading another generation in Hindu worship.

There are two kinds of people in this world. The first kind is that who always trumpet that they know everything and make sure that the others knew about it. The other kind is that who sit quietly and would discuss matters if asked upon. Jeya fits the latter and God does not make "Jeya-models" any more and perhaps they may not

survive in the current "Me" world.

In the nineties and when the Past students' association of St. Johns College and CGC was actively functioning, Jeya will be one of the first few to renew the subscription and was a keen member supporting the association. She was always interested in matters at the CGC.

Tributes from her grandchildren indicate that Jeya had been "the voice of reason and the beacon of light for her family who also enjoyed gardening, reading and expanding upon her already profound knowledge of history and geography". Jeya has been a great influence in her grandchildren's upbringing particularly teaching Tamil, reciting thevaaram and even singing Tamil cinema songs.

Some people have the tendency to tip-toe softly into one's life and shut the door with a big-bang when they leave. Jeya is one of those kinds who have left a void among her family and friends. Jeya has taken her life's journey to an unknown pain-free destination. But she has left a huge luggage of memories behind for all her family and friends. Let us cherish her memory by sharing them in the future.

(Condensed version of the tribute given on her 31st day 19.04.2015)

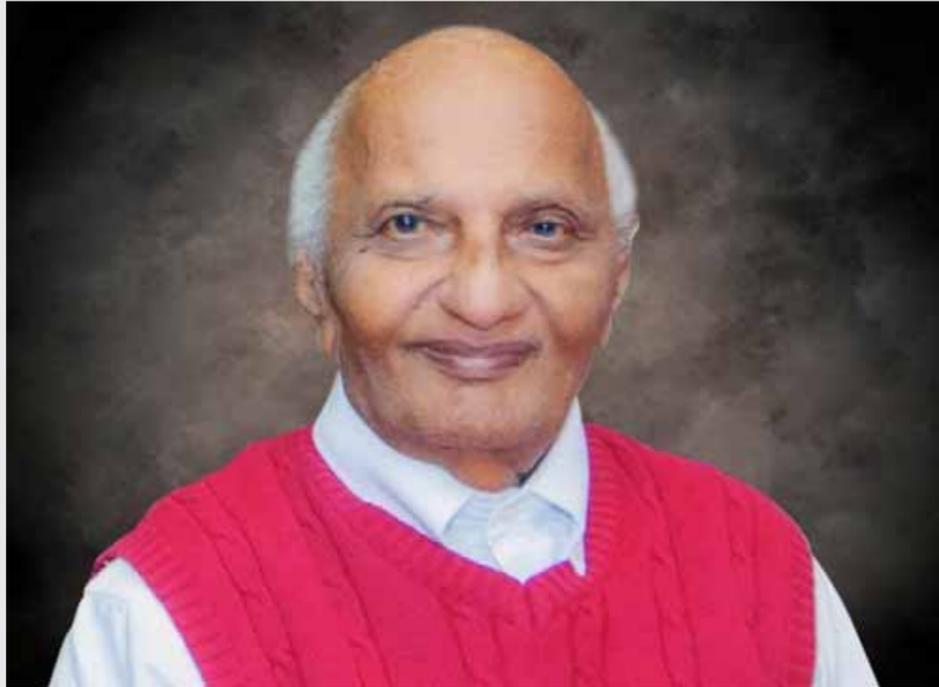


Monsoon Journal is proud to inform everyone that we are in our
10th year of circulation.

We thank all our advertisers, readers and well-wishers
who helped us reach this milestone.



The Journey of My Father, *Mr. Rajanayagam Rajadeva*



Rajadeva Rajanayagam (April 10th, 1935 — May 5, 2015)

**A Tribute by son Ahilan for his father
Mr. Rajanayagam Rajadeva**

Sri Lanka is an Island in the Indian Ocean, and the northern peninsula of the island is called Jaffna. In the Jaffna peninsula, in the Thellippalai town, there lies a small village called Varthalai Vilan. In this village, the image of Vinayagar, also known as Pillaiyar originated in the Maruthu Tree. To symbolize this Vinayagar image, a temple called Maruthady Vinayagar was built. Since then, this village is widely known for this temple, Varthalai Villan Maruthady Vinayargar Aalayam. In this respected village, late Ponnambalam Rasanayagam, my appaiya, and his late wife Thanganesam Sabapathi Pillai, my appuchi, lived a happy, prosperous life.

They had four children: My Appa, Rajadeva, was the eldest, second is Rajeswari (Canada), third was late Sivanesan (UK), and the fourth is Shanthini (UK).

Appa was born on April 10th, 1935. He finished his early education at Union College, Thellippalai, Jaffna. The whole family then moved to Colombo in 1950 and appa continued his studies at Colombo Hindu College and completed his higher studies. They were all living at no 12 Ramakrishna Road, Wellawatte, Sri Lanka at that time. This house was well known to me since that is where I spent my early childhood growing up. He worked as an accountant at C.F.T Engineering Company, and then at Browns & Company Limited, in Sri Lanka. He was a very hardworking, honest man who was truly devoted to his job.

In his time in Sri Lanka, he married my mom, Vimala in 1974, and then eventually had me as his only child.

We lived in Ratmalana, Sri Lanka for a while before we permanently moved to USA together in

1996. Educating me was his top priority. He has been planning and working towards it since I was born. Once we came to United States, he even took up a new job that he is not used to or comfortable doing at the age of 62, but worked hard day and night for us to make sure that I completed my studies.

Once I finished my education and got a job, I requested him to retire and relax. I am glad that I was able to finish my studies and be the person that I am today while he was alive. With god's grace, he was able to witness my graduations for undergrad and graduate degrees, bless me at my wedding, and spent a lot of good years with me, my wife and my kids. I am blessed that he was able to spend good quality with my children, play with them, teach them and enjoy with them at all their different stages in life.

My kids have spent enough time with him that they are at an age now where they can now fondly remember their times with Appappa. That holds especially true for Harini and Yuvan. I am happy that he had a chance to meet my youngest child, Sanvi and I know she will always remember him through all of us and from the all the precious moments we had captured of them together.

He had a really good and complete life. In the past 15 years, he traveled around to Canada, Sri Lanka, UK and even China, and seen most of the good things that happened in our life. He was there on all the occasions and functions that we had, and he even visited me in Beijing, China and stayed there for three months with us. Over there, he climbed the Great Wall of China and seen the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square.

I can't ask much from him at this age. I can't ask him to hold onto till my kids graduation or wedding. That would be too much suffering on this part. We are thankful and grateful that he

has lived 80 years filled with love, happiness and good times. I thank you God for allowing him to stay with us this long.

My father is a born vegetarian and a strong Hindu. I found out from one of the elders in our community that he volunteered as an assistant to saiva priest at Maruthaddy Vinayagar Temple during his childhood, and learned all the agamas and vedantams. When there is a religious occasion or ceremony in our extended family, he is the one who knows what to do and helps everyone to do it the correct way. He has taught me the fundamentals of life and saiva samayam to me. He is an ardent Murugan follower and a Sai Baba devotee after he married my mom. He has observed Kantha Shashti Upavaasam for six days from childhood with just one meal of fruits and milk until recently. His devotion and discipline towards God is such that he doesn't sit down and teach me or tell me. Just seeing him do it and experiencing such a devotion is how I learned it myself.

His journey on this earth with us ended on May 5th, 2015. We are all now remembering and celebrating his accomplished full life and documenting the memories and his influences on our lives in this book. His journey towards heaven, towards God and to finally be one with God has begun.

Appa, thank you for all the beautiful memories and for this wonderful, blessed life that you have given us. If there is a next life for me, I would like to be your son again. We all love you from the bottom of my heart.

(Ahilan R can be reached at: arajadeva@hotmail.com)

This tribute is written in loving memory of Mr. Rajanayagam Rajadeva in the book released at the 31st day of his death anniversary held in New Jersey, USA on Sunday, June 7, 2015.)



Remembering M. C E Anandarajan-Former Principal St. John's College, Jaffna, Sri Lanka: Reflections of a son

By Rev. Dev Anandarajan

It is 30 years since the death of my beloved father who was killed by the LTTE on June 26th 1985.

Many things have happened since then and I hope we can contemplate on the violent path taken by the LTTE and the unconditional support given by most of the Tamils to address their grievances against the Sri Lankan state.

I wonder if we have a collective maturity as citizens of Sri Lanka (Tamils, Sinhalese, Muslims, Burghers and other minorities) and Sri Lankan Diaspora to learn the lessons from the violent path from both sides and what that has led us to.

I am not going to dwell on the politics of the conflict but rather reflect on the legacy of my late father whom the LTTE portrayed as a 'Traitor' when they gunned him down. What they did not know and failed to realise was that many such people whom they killed loved the land and the people they served.

They were not stooges of the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) or against the legitimate rights of the Tamil people but were doing their part in a very explosive political situation. Many of those who were killed both by the militants and the GOSL had opportunities to leave the country as many of us have done and seek greener pasture and safety. But they stayed put because of their conviction and dedication.

The last time I saw my father was in December 1984 when he with my mother and brother came on a holiday to Bangalore. Two of my sisters Vasanthi & Jeyanthi and I were already in India. We booked a cottage at Vishranthi Nilayam in Bangalore and had an enjoyable family time. Sorna was the one missing as she was married and was living in British Guyana. Knowing the political situation I was making inquiries to get my father to relocate to a Mission school in Ootty. When I mentioned this to him his response was firm. 'I will live and die in Jaffna.'

When a Student Organisation organised a meeting to condemn the Standardisation Policy of the GOSL they approached Principals and Educationist to speak at the meeting. Many refused fearing they may be targeted by the GOSL. My father willingly agreed to speak in a public forum condemning the policy which he did.

There is another incident that many may not know. When the youth resistance started in the late 70s and early 80s there were many groups that sprung up. A famous BBC reported

visited Jaffna undercover to report on the ground situation and the political situation. He was keen to interview leaders of the resistance groups. But organising a meeting with the security tightened was impossible. When my father came to know of this he took the risk of organising the meeting at the Principal's bungalow. Leaders of different groups came and met the reporter at the bungalow. That evening the reporter relayed the news to the BBC headquarters through the phone at the Principal's bungalow.

My father did not agree with the violent path taken by the youth. He knew where it would end. He wanted to safeguard especially the students of St. John's College (SJC), Jaffna under his educational care from falling prey to the propaganda of the militants. He would never allow St John's College to be a platform to promote the path of violence. It would be good to reflect on that wisdom.

Once a militant group wanted to distribute pamphlets inside the school. He not only stopped it but engaged with the militants and told them in no uncertain terms that he was in charge at SJC and the day they came in against his orders he would get out of SJC. The militants respectfully left the place.

My mother, my sisters and brother have had a time to reflect on how we have travelled the last 30 years. In the sharing there has been pain, tears and joy. Our pain is joined with the pain of all those who have lost their loved ones in this meaningless war no matter on which side of the politics they were. We have played politics with our pain for so long and that needs to stop. We need to humanise the pain so that we may reach across our divisiveness and hold hands to resolve that what we went through no human should go through again. At least resolve to do our part and not fall prey to the politics of divisiveness.

The death of my father has also strengthened us in our resolve for justice and human rights and the non violent path of resistance. The brutal end of the war has signalled we need to break decisively with those failed policies of the LTTE as well as those of the Sri Lankan ruling elite and self-interested politicians who would not hesitate to plunder the country and divide its people for political and economic gain. Instead we must build a new and a bold movement that could unite all those who have been exploited, disadvantaged and marginalized.

While much needs to be done with regard to race relations in Sri Lanka it is heartening that grass root move-



C.E. Anandarajan

(January 31, 1931 – June 26, 1985)

ments are initiating programmes where communication is happening.

There is also a call to the Diaspora communities. The challenge to us is whether we can model a harmonious community of various ethnic and religious backgrounds of people of Sri Lankan origin and background in our adopted countries. This community can be a catalyst, a reference point offering an alternative to failed and missed opportunities for harmony in Sri Lanka.

This community needs to be an open community where members will listen to each other, respect the opinions and

views shared even though we may not fully agree with them but continue to dialogue and stand together affirming the goodness in each community. There also needs to be a strong commitment to Human Rights and Justice and Equality for all and not just for an interested ethnic group.

We must also acknowledge that there is still so much of bitterness, hatred, suspicion and name calling between and within communities. We need leadership both at political, civic and religious levels from all communities that calls for a spirit of tolerance, acceptance and most importantly forgiveness so that the hatred and bitterness could be put to rest and genuine dialogue can begin in the spirit of understanding with a strong will to work towards justice, peace and harmony.

The path will not be easy. But pursue it we must for the sake of our own humanity and our future generations so that the death of those who like my father and others who dreamed of a peaceful Sri Lanka will not be in vain.

(Rev Dev Anandarajan is a Minister of Religion in the Uniting Church in Australia. He migrated to Australia in 1996 and works as Research and Development Officer in the Intercultural Unit of the Commission For Mission in the Uniting Church in Australia in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania- facebook.com/dev.anandarajan)

Naathasvaram maestro Dr Murugappa Panchapikesan passes away

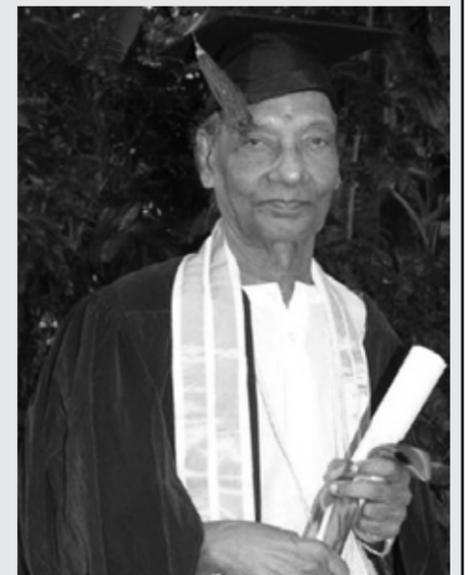
Dr Murugappa Panchapikesan, a renowned expert in Naathasvaram, passed away on June 22nd in Colombo at the age of 91. Funeral services were held at his native village of Changkaththaanai in Chaavakachcheari, Sri Lanka North on June 26th.

Tamil academics, artists, cultural activists and public turned out in large numbers to pay their last respects to the artist. Naathasvaram is the most widely used wind instrument in weddings and auspicious rituals of cultural and religious significance among the Tamils.

Born on 01 July 1924 as the eldest son to Thavil Vidwan Murugappapillay and Chinnappillay, Panchapikesan debuted as Naathasvaram artist at the age of 15. He has held his Naathasvaram recitals in many parts of the island and outside the island.

The University of Jaffna awarded

Panchapikesan honorary doctorate in 2010 for his immense contributions to Arts of Tamils across the Palk Straits and in instilling their heritage globally.





DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION CELEBRATED ANNUAL BBQ & SPORTS MEET



TEAM DTA WITH DIGNITARIES DURING THE ANNUAL BBQ & SPORTS MEET ON 7TH JUNE 2015

Durham Tamil Association celebrated it's 14th Annual BBQ & Sports Meet on Sunday June 7th in Greenwood Conservation Area. Many dignitaries including Canada's Minister for Citizenship and Immigration Hon. Chris Alexander, MP Corneliu Chisu, MPP Joe Dickson, Councillor David Pickles, Councillor Steve Yemada, Manager of Ajax Welcome Centre Hermia Corbette, Director of Education for DDSB Martyn Beckett, Chairperson of ICCAD Shashi Bhatia, President of FCHRD Evelyn Poliarco, Executive Director of WMRCC Esther Enyolu, President of Friends Indeed Vaqar Raees, VP of Friends Indeed Saeed Siddiqui, Shaima Abdali & Tariq Fahimi of Canadian Afghan Council, President of Nepalese Canadian Community Services Gopal Bhandari and Yan Fu of DACA were in attendance.

Various games including running race, 3 legged race, throw ball, lemon spoon, relay, dice picking game, sack race etc.,

were organized by our youth for kids of all ages, with the guidance of Pathmaraja Sithamparapillai, who is an active sportsman of our group. The winners were awarded with a medal by dignitaries. Spicy and hot kothu roti was sponsored generously by Canbe Foods. Uthayan, Hanthan & Nimalan were serving hotdogs and hamburgers while Kanga, Selvan & Saravanan were making the kothu roti. Minister Chris Alexander enjoyed the BBQ with his family for nearly 2 hours and made kothu roti which amazed all the families.

Cool treats helped the families to quench the thirst, while the beautiful weather helped the participants to stay active.

TEAM DTA Youth and children presented the Big Cheque for \$ 7317.26 to the dignitaries which they raised for the Canadian Cancer Society through the 2015 Daffodil Campaign.

Our sincere thanks to all the parent volunteers, committed youth and the Board of Directors who made this event a great success.



Boys Running Race



Hon. Minister Chris Alexander making spicy Kothu Roti with VP Kanga Sivanathan & Saravanan



WITNESSES FROM 'NO FIRE ZONE' TESTIFY AT UNHRC EVENT ON DISAPPEARANCES IN SRI LANKA

Several witnesses from the 'No Fire Zone' of the final stages during war in Sri Lanka revealed their testimonies at a side event on disappearances at the 29th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, on June 25th.

The event was organised by Pasumai Thayagam in collaboration with British Tamils Forum (BTF) and the United States Tamil Political Action Council (USTPAC). "The room heard harrowing witness statements by families of those killed in the 'White Flag Incident' and families of the disappeared, in what was a moving ordeal for both the panel and audience", The Tamil Guardian reported.

The event was attended by representatives from the missions of America, Cuba, Botswana, UK, Australia, Sri Lanka and several NGOs including Human Rights Watch.

The following are Witness statements reproduced of Ms Kurunchi - Member of Liberation Tamil Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) Civil Administration and wife of Chief Peace Secretariat (LTTE), Ms Jayanthan Susilambigai - Member of the LTTE Civil Administration Department and Son of LTTE Political wing leader Nadesan:

MS KURUNCHI:

I am the wife of Pulithevan who was the peace secretariat for the LTTE. He surrendered alongside other political leaders and Tamil civilians and was killed by security forces. Previously My husband took part in several rounds of peacetalks held in Europe from 2002-2006 and worked strenuously to broker peace.

During the final stages of the war he was communicating with the international community to update them on the situation of civilian casualties in the No Fire Zone.

On May 16 2009, we moved to our final destination in the No Fire Zone of Mullivaikal. My husband, who was the LTTE peace secretariat, Pulithevan, asked me to surrender with Tamil civilians into government hands because I was ill. He said he would stay with LTTE Political wing leader Nadesan.

On May 17 2009, I crossed Vatuwal bridge into the military controlled areas. Before I left Pulithevan speaking to international community through satellite phones to discuss a surrender mechanism.

I stayed in the Chetikulam internment camp for a month after the end of the war.

I was not aware of what happened outside of the camp.

When I left the camp after 1 month, I came to know that my husband Pulithevan along with other cadres and injured civilians had walked into the military controlled area holding a white flag

and was killed. I don't know why they were killed after they agreed a surrender. We do not know who placed the order for their killing or how they were killed.

After informing the highest level authorities in Sri Lanka and people in the international community, I want to know why those people who surrendered were killed. I urge the international community to give justice for thousands of people like me.

MS JAYANTHAN SUSILAMBIGAI:

My name is Jayanthan Susilambigai and my husband was a member of the LTTE working within the civil administration department. On the 18th of May 2009, myself along with my husband and child crossed the Vattuvakl bridge to a military controlled area and there I handed over my husband to the security forces.

I saw more than 200 members of the LTTE surrendering in front of me, some of them included Mr. Poovanan, Piriyan along with his wife Santhini and child, Uthayan along with his wife Nalini, Thankaiya, Elancheran, Nagesh, Vijitharan, Elian, Sutha, Kumaran and Viman.

All of these individuals were a part of the LTTE's civil administration department. They separated my husband from me and my child and kept him where other members of the LTTE were and we were taken to Rhamanathan Camp in Chettikula, which was away from where my husband was taken.

When I was detained in Rhamanathan Camp, I was taken away from the camp and sexually tortured by the security forces in civil uniform and then brought back to the camp.

On the 18th of May later that morning I came to know that the political leaders had been killed.

SON OF LTTE POLITICAL WING LEADER NADESAN:

I am the son of Mr Nadesan, who was the Political wing Head of the LTTE.

It was the last stages of the civil war and it was very anxious time for me and for the entire Tamil community. I had been in regular contact with my dad at the last stages and it was 15 of May 2009 he first mentioned that they were in talks with several parties for a surrender. He didn't mention any names nor I did ask any details about the surrender but he said they were looking for guarantee for their and families lives and surrender in the presence of third party. He said he will take to me later and passed the phone over to mum.

That was the last time I heard

my mum's and brother's voices and I could see they were terrified and scared from their voices about the whole situation.

It was on 18th of May in the early morning, I had a desperate call from my dad and that was the last time I spoke to him. Dad said that everything had been arranged

and families with him and prepared for surrender (I could hear noises in the background). At that time I couldn't speak to mum, brother or sister due very tense circumstances and dad said "if I don't get back to you in sometime, assume something has happened".

I couldn't sleep that night and photos of my dad's body appeared on the internet in the same day. It was unbearable to see him lying down like that. Later I learnt from various media sources that dad was beaten and shot dead while mum was begging the SL Army to not to beat him as he is already surrendered then mum was shot dead while she was begging and crying for her life in front my brother and sister. I can't even imagine what my sister and brother would have gone thorough when parents were killed in front of their eyes. I didn't really know what happened to them.

It is hard for me to get back to normal but life has to go on, I am still searching for answers and feel like no one is here to help me in this world. I really want to know what happened. Why are they not alive today? Above all is there going to be any justice?



and ready for the surrender, and that they advised him to go with a white flag and surrender to the Sri Lankan Army. He also said that there are many wounded carders



Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham

Community Watch



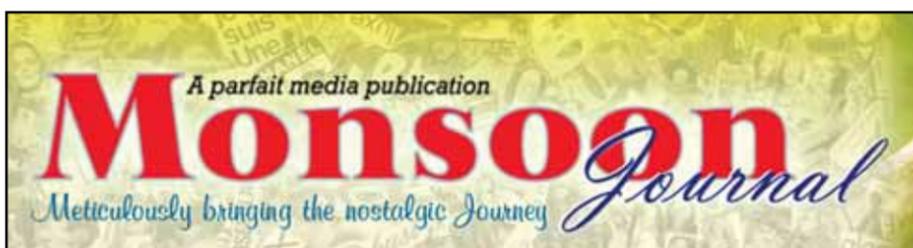
Tamil Cultural Academic Society of Durham GATSBY'S Lights of Hope Charity Gala

On Saturday, May 30th, 2015, the Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) was proud to host its 6th Annual Lights of Hope Charity Gala at the Pickering Recreation Complex in Pickering. This year's gala was held in support of the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH), an organization dedicated to transforming the lives of those with various mental health conditions.

For years the establishment of a tight knit group of individuals has been the result of the various events and initiatives held by TCASD. One such event – the annual gala – is a remarkable representation of the dedication and continued hard work of its executive and youth members.

The evening featured a delicious buffet dinner, live song, dance performances, and even a lesson in the Charleston to go with the galas 1920s Gatsby theme! The organization was able to share this evening of festivities with members from various levels of government, and the community.

Most importantly, TCASD was able to share the importance of mental health awareness with members of the South Asian community and support an organization that understands the necessity of culturally competent care. A \$4000 check was presented to a representative of CAMH during the evening's program – the greatest highlight of the evening.



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Peace and Community Harmony Multicultural Performing Arts Concert

On Saturday June 20, 2015, the Town of Ajax put on the Peace and Community Harmony Multicultural Performing Arts Concert for Ajax Home Week at the Pickering Town Centre.

The Ajax Home Week "Peace and Community Harmony Concert" – Towards a Global Society, and Diversity Expo, will be a "Celebration of Unity in Diversity" – and will honor the "Strength of the Human Spirit."

One of the events was a performance

by youth members of the Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham. The song was coordinated by the vocalists' music teacher, Mrs. Tharmini Thishyan. The vocalists of the performance were Varuni Vigneswaran, Rijithan Sasitharan, Ahitya Sasitharan, Shamalee Vijeyakumar, and Sinduja Sundarajn. The keyboard player was Praveen Vijeyakumar, and the Drum Pad player was Laxen Dushianthan. The performance was a song named Azhage Azhagu.



TCASD's Academic Competition

By: Praveen Vijeyakumar

The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham hosted an academic competition on Sunday, March 29, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Ontario Power Generation in Pickering. The contest was for students in Durham from grades 1-8 and consisted of four key subject areas: Math, English, Tamil, and Art. This year about forty to fifty students participated in the competition. The contest gives awards to the first, second, and third best scores in every two grades such as 1-2, or 3-4. TCASD encourages kids to take part in this competition, because the students who are involved actively participate in

the academics.

During the break time of the contest, the students were also invited to take part in a short Easter egg hunt where chocolate eggs were hidden in a room beside the room where the contest was written. The kids who found the eggs got to eat them at the end. TCASD will be having an awards ceremony later on that will give awards to the winning students of each section of the competition. Visit TCASD's website www.tamilsociety.ca for more details and contact TCASD at (416) 984-2423 or at (905) 576-9937.

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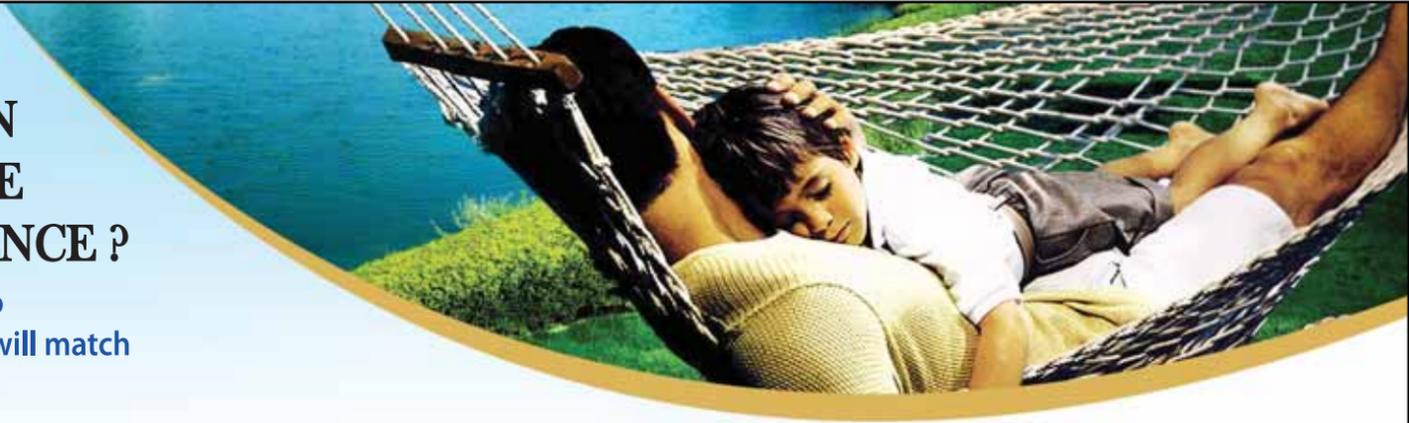


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Hon.Minister Chris Alexander presenting the medal to the winners of the sports meet



TEAM DTA Youth & children raised \$7317 for the Canadian Cancer Society through 2015 Daffodil Campaign



Councillor Steve Yamada & his wife with Josh, President of Friends Indeed Vaqar Raees & Councillor David Pickles



Big Cheque for raising \$7317 for the Canadian Cancer Society was given to Hon.Minister Chris Alexander, MP Corneliu Chisu, MPP Joe Dickson & Councillor Yamada by TEAM DTA Youth



MPP Joe Dickson giving the countdown for the girls' running race



Councillor Steve Yamada giving the countdown for the Relay



Children getting ready for the legged race



Small children enjoying the 3 legged race



VP of Friends Indeed Saeed Siddiqui commencing youth games



Hon. Minister Chris Alexander presenting the medal to the winners of the games



MPP Joe Dickson with the TEAM DTA Youth

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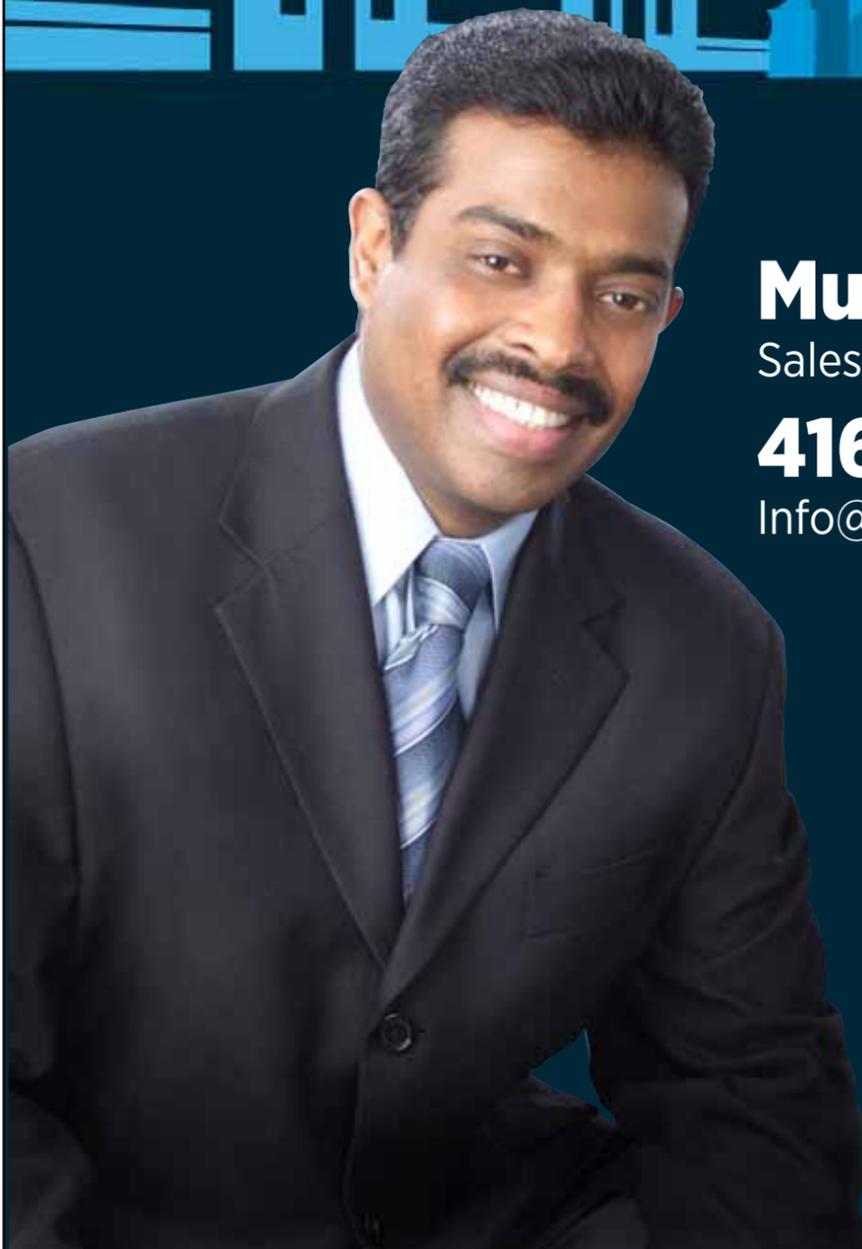
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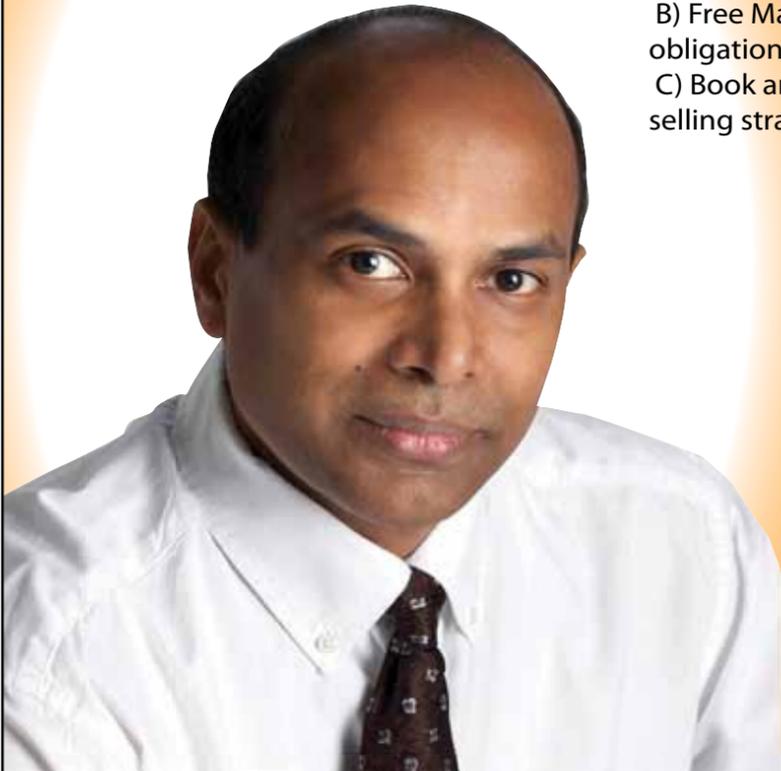
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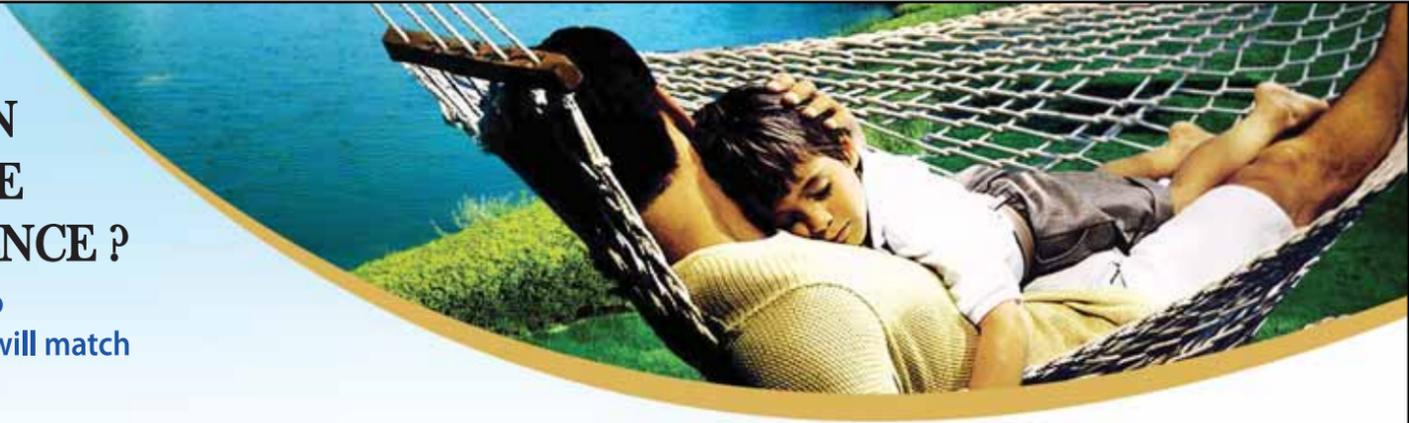
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