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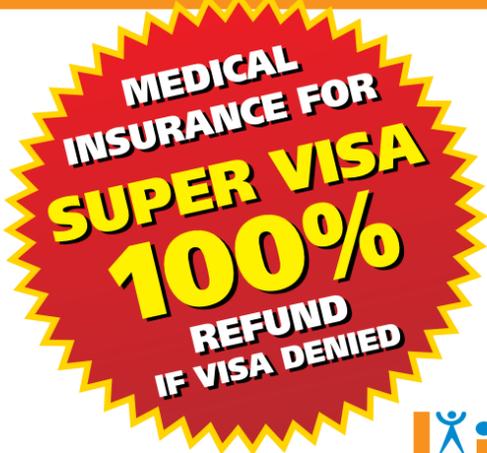
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## "Budget 2016 an Attack on Seniors" - Ontario PC Party

March 02, 2016

QUEEN'S PARK – Ontario Budget 2016 proved that for Ontario's seniors, life is harder under the Liberals.

The Liberal Government is nearly doubling the annual deductible under the Ontario Drug Benefit, increasing it by \$70. The Budget also increases the co-payment per prescription by \$1. Seniors will now have to pay more for life-saving medication, and only the few seniors under the income threshold of \$19,300 are offered any relief.

"1 in 10 seniors already don't fill their prescription because of the cost, and now the government just made medication nearly twice as expensive for seniors. How out of touch is this government to think a senior making \$19,000 dollars is rich?" Leader of the Official Opposition Patrick Brown

asked the Acting Premier Deb Matthews during Question Period.

This attack on Ontario's senior citizens is in addition to the government also eliminating the Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit, which helped seniors live independently and safely in their homes. What's more, the Liberal Government's health care cuts which have disproportionately hurt seniors, including cuts to cataract surgeries and physiotherapy services.

"Seniors already have a tough time finding a doctor. And the Liberals have made that harder by cutting medical residency spots. That comes after the government cut \$50-million from senior's physiotherapy services," Brown concluded. "Will the Liberals stop their attack on seniors?"

- Via: [ontariopc.com](http://ontariopc.com)

## Google search 'How to Move to Canada' reaches an all-time high

March 4- The Google search "How to move to Canada" reached an all-time high this week, right after Super Tuesday in the United States.

On Super Tuesday (March 1), 13 states and one territory voted to choose their preferred Republican Party and Democratic Party presidential candidates. It was the most important day yet in the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign.

Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump both won seven states on Super Tuesday. Trump now has one-third of the total delegates needed to win his party's nomination.

As Trump gets closer and closer to the Republican nomination, it seems, more and more Americans are looking into moving to Canada.

Simon Rogers is a data editor at Google. He tweeted about the sudden search increase. He wrote earlier this week: "Searches for 'How can I move to Canada' on Google have spiked 350 percent in the past four hours #SuperTuesday."

But that was only the start of the Google trend. The Google search "How to move to Canada" actually spiked more than 1,000 percent this week.

The travel search engine Kayak took notice. Using the hashtag #1waytocanada, it offered 10 winners on Twitter one-way plane tickets to Canada.

An official from the Canadian city of Toronto also offered help to Ameri-

cans looking to move to their neighbor to the north.

Toronto City Councillor Norm Kelly tweeted: "To all my American followers tweeting at me tonight, here's the link." His tweet included a link to the web page "Apply to Immigrate to Canada."

Norm Kelly's post has been retweeted more than 46,000 times.

And, a resident of Canada's Cape Breton created the website CBifTrumpwins.com. The island off Canada's east coast is "experiencing a bit of a population problem," as the site says.

The website also says Cape Breton would welcome "all, no matter who you support, be it Democratic, Republican or Donald Trump." (Via: Voice of America ~ Dan Friedell- Ashley Thompson wrote this story for Learning English. Hai Do was the editor)



## Canada contributes US\$2 million to pursue accountability for chemical weapons use in Syria

Canada's Chargé d'affaires and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Michael Grant, on February 18th announced that Canada will contribute US\$2 million (C\$2.8 million) to support the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (OPCW-UN JIM) to attribute responsibility for chemical weapons attacks in Syria.

"The repeated use of chemical weapons in the Syrian conflict is a moral affront to the international community and violates the hard-won global taboo against these odious weapons," said Ambassador Grant. "Bringing those responsible for such war crimes to justice is a priority for Canada. We are pleased to support the JIM in its critical mission."

The OPCW-UN JIM is tasked with identifying those individuals, entities, groups, or governments who were perpetrators, organizers, sponsors, or otherwise involved in the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Established by UN Security Council Resolution 2235 in August 2015, the Mechanism released



its first report on February 12, 2016 indicating that their investigation will initially focus on at least six instances of chemical weapons use in 2014 and 2015 confirmed by the OPCW's Fact-Finding Mission.

This contribution complements a €2.5 million (C\$3.9 million) allocation by Canada to the OPCW's Trust Fund for Syria Missions – announced in tandem this week in The Hague – to support the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons program and investigate allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria. Both contributions will be funded by Canada's Global Partnership Program, established in 2002 to reduce the threat posed by the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons, materials, and expertise. - [canadainternational.gc.ca](http://canadainternational.gc.ca)

## Government of Canada seeks projects that empower women

Achieving gender equality depends on ensuring that the voices of diverse women are heard in Canada's public discourse. When women are empowered to participate in the democratic and public life of their country, they can shape the institutions and decisions that affect their lives. On February 17, as part of the Government of Canada's commitment to advancing gender equality, the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Status of Women, invited organizations to submit proposals for projects that increase women's participation in the democratic and public life.

This call for proposals is divided into two streams. Under the first stream, Empowering Indigenous Women for Stronger Communities, the Government of Canada will support projects that will strengthen the voices of Indigenous women on issues of importance to them and their communities.

Projects under the second stream

will focus on two themes. The first, Empowering Women for Political Action, will promote the participation of women in political life (e.g. addressing barriers to running for elected positions). The second, Empowering Women for Community Action, will include projects that improve conditions for women by amplifying women's voices and enhancing their civic participation.

Minister Hajdu made the announcement at an event hosted by Equal Voice to welcome the women elected to the 42nd Parliament. Equal Voice is an Ottawa-based organization dedicated to electing more women to all levels of political office in Canada. During the event, the Minister spoke about her personal experiences in leadership roles at the grassroots level and her transition into politics, highlighting the challenges that women leaders continue to face.

- More info on: <http://swc-cfc.gc.ca/>



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# March 13, 2016: "Spring Forward"



Our calendars are filled with much activity or significance for each and every one of us, every single day.

Will an hour forward on Sunday, March 13th this year – in all of North America, and 78 other countries, setting their clocks ahead one hour for Daylight Saving Time is a cause for celebration? Many in Canada and USA will say “yes” as it rings the arrival of spring officially, a week later on March 20th.

Lawmakers, scientists and social activists may question the usefulness of the time change from time to time these days, however it signals an uplifting moment in accordance with the nature and weather pattern for all.

The very many meanings of spring itself makes it's a much awed period to look forward to.

Words such as to rise, leap, move, or act suddenly and swiftly, water rising from earth, one's birth or lineage are all associated with Spring.

International Day of Nowruz, observed on 21 March by the United Nations Organization is an event that emboldens this time of the year.

The UN briefs on the background of marking The International Day of Nowruz as follows:

“The word Nowruz (Novruz, Navruz, Nooruz, Nevruz, Nauryz), means new day; its spelling and pronunciation may vary by country.

Nowruz marks the first day of spring and is celebrated on the day of the astronomical vernal equinox, which usually occurs on 21 March. It is celebrated as the beginning of the new year by more than 300 million people all around the world and has been celebrated for over 3000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions.

Nowruz plays a significant role in strengthening the ties among peoples based on mutual respect and

the ideals of peace and good neighbourliness. Its traditions and rituals reflect the cultural and ancient customs of the civilizations of the East and West, which influenced those civilizations through the interchange of human values.

Celebrating Nowruz means the affirmation of life in harmony with nature, awareness of the inseparable link between constructive labour and natural cycles of renewal and a solicitous and respectful attitude towards natural sources of life.

Under the agenda item of “culture of peace”, the member states of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan prepared and introduced a draft resolution (A/64/L.30) entitled “International Day of Nowruz” to the ongoing 64th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations for its consideration and adoption.

In the 71st plenary meeting on 23 February 2010, The General Assembly welcomed the inclusion of Nowruz in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 30 September 2009.

It also recognized 21 March as the International Day of Nowruz, and invited interested Member States, the United Nations, in particular its relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and mainly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and interested international and regional organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations, to participate in events organized by States where Nowruz is celebrated.”

Monsoon Journal joins all hands, hearts and souls in ushering into this wonderful time of the year.

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Happy  
International  
Women's  
Day



“Success is only meaningful and enjoyable if it feels like your own” - Michelle Obama (b: January 17, 1964) First lady of the United States

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# NDP Calls on the Liberals to keep their promises and create ring of fire jobs

March 02, 2016 - Ontario NDP Northern Development and Mines Critic, Michael Mantha (MPP, Algoma-Manitoulin) demanded to know when northerners will see Ontario's Ring of Fire begin development and start creating jobs.

"The Liberals call the Ring of Fire a 'once in a lifetime opportunity.' The real question is: whose lifetime?" said Mantha. "People in Northern Ontario want to see the Ring of Fire up and running because it means good, stable jobs across the north, and they've been waiting for a long time. Will northerners ever see the Liberals keep their promises on the Ring of Fire?"

Mantha noted that developing the Ring of Fire would create long-term high-value jobs across the north in exploration, construction, refining and a range of skilled trades. Responsible development of the Ring of Fire will have wide-ranging impacts for communities across Northern Ontario.

"The Liberals have been announcing a plan to invest \$1 billion in the Ring of Fire since 2014. And their



'mining strategy' earlier this year also made no new commitments, or provide timelines, or a course of action. If the government invested a dollar every time they reannounced their plan for the Ring of Fire, we might actually see some investment," said Mantha. "Instead of seeing investment and jobs, all Northerners are getting is 'cut and paste' promises on the Ring of Fire from the Liberals."

- via: ontariondp.ca

## "Ontario's economic growth is now outpacing national growth"

Finance Minister Charles Sousa released the 2016 Ontario Budget on 25th of February, outlining the next phase of the government's plan to create jobs and economic growth. The Ministry of Finance is forecasting growth in Ontario real GDP of 2.5 per cent in 2015 and 2.2 per cent in 2016. Ontario's economic growth is now outpacing national growth, and is expected to continue being among the strongest in Canada over the next two years.

Finance Minister Charles Sousa stated that, "The Province's economic plan supports good jobs today in communities across Ontario by investing in infrastructure and in a low-carbon economy driven by innovative, high-growth, export-oriented businesses.

The plan invests in people's talents and skills and their ability to get and create the jobs of the future, by expanding access to high-quality college and university education. The plan also helps all Ontarians achieve a more secure retirement."

- ontario.ca



## New Ontario Student Grant Making Tuition Free for Tens of Thousands of Students

- College and University Becoming More Accessible and Affordable

Ontario is making college and university more accessible and affordable for low- and middle-income students and their families through the single-largest modernization ever of the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

Premier Kathleen Wynne was at Jarvis Collegiate in Toronto on March 1 to present details about the new Ontario Student Grant, which was announced in the 2016 Budget. Under the new grant program, the government will replace a number of existing provincial assistance programs with a single, targeted, non-repayable Ontario Student Grant starting in the 2017-18 academic year. The changes to OSAP will make average tuition free for more than 150,000 eligible low- and middle-income students, and will reduce the cost for many more by:

- Providing the majority of eligible students whose parents earn the median annual income of \$83,300 or less with enough in grants to more than cover their tuition costs

- Eliminating provincial student loan debt for eligible students whose parents earn less than \$50,000

- Ensuring that no eligible student receives less non-repayable aid through the new grant than they currently do through the 30% Off Ontario Tuition Grant.

The Ontario Student Grant will provide additional support for full-time mature and married students, and eligibility will no longer be tied to the number of years a student has been out of high school. This predictable, upfront grant will allow families to plan for their education on the basis of net price -- the difference between the sticker price of tuition and what a student actually needs to pay. The government will work closely with the postsecondary sector to develop planning tools that more accurately calculate the net tuition and net price of a university or college education.

Ontario's highly skilled workforce is one of its greatest competitive advantages. In 2014, 66 per cent of On-

tario adults had a post-secondary credential, up from 56 per cent in 2002 and higher than the rates for any country



in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, positioning Ontario to meet or exceed its target of 70 per cent by 2020.

Breaking down barriers to post-secondary education is part of the government's economic plan to build Ontario up and deliver on its number-one priority to grow the economy and create jobs. The four-part plan includes investing in talent and skills, including helping more people get and create the jobs of the future by expanding access to high-quality college and university education. The plan is making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history and investing in a low-carbon economy driven by innovative, high-growth, export-oriented businesses. The plan is also helping working Ontarians achieve a more secure retirement.

### Quick Facts:

- About 80 per cent of OSAP recipients, or 250,000 students, are expected to end up with lower student loan debt as a result of the changes to OSAP than they would under current OSAP rules.

- Ninety per cent of dependent college students whose parents earn less than \$50,000 are expected to receive OSAP grants that are greater than average college tuition.

- Seventy per cent of dependent university students whose parents earn less than \$50,000 are expected to receive OSAP grants that are greater than average university tuition.

- The \$50,000 family income threshold is based on Statistics Canada's Low-Income Measure for a four-person household, before tax.

(via: news.ontario.ca)



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# After 30 years of conflict, Sri Lanka still in 'early stages of renewal' – UN rights chief

After nearly 30 years of conflict and acrimony that not only cost tens of thousands of lives but also eroded vital components of the State, Sri Lanka is still in the early stages of renewal, the United Nations human rights chief said on 9TH February, ending a mission to the country.

"Virtually everyone agrees there has been progress, although opinions differ markedly about the extent of that progress," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein said in a statement to the press, issued from Colombo.

During his four-day visit, Mr. Zeid met with several senior Government officials, including President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. In Colombo, he visited the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and the Task Force that will lead the forthcoming National Consultations on transitional justice. On Sunday, he was in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of the country.

"This has been a much more friend-

than they deserve," he added.

Progress & Challenges

Noting that Sri Lanka has come a long way in the past year with the media now having greater freedom, Mr. Zeid said the element of fear has considerably diminished, at least in Colombo and the South, but in the North and the East, "it has mutated but, sadly, still exists."

On the positive side, he highlighted several recent "highly symbolic steps" taken that have had a positive impact on inter-communal relations, including the decision to sing the national anthem in both Sinhala and Tamil on Independence Day, for the first time since the early 1950s. He also indicated that one of the most important long-term achievements over the past year has been the restoration of the legitimacy and independence of Sri Lanka's Human Rights Commission.

But despite these advances, he said Sri Lanka is still in the early stages of renewal. "Repairing the damage done by a protracted conflict is a task of enor-



ly, cooperative and encouraging visit than the one my predecessor endured in August 2013, which as you may recall was marred by vituperative attacks on her integrity, simply because she addressed a number of burning human rights issues that any High Commissioner for Human Rights would have raised at that time," said Mr. Zeid, referring to former UN rights chief Navi Pillay.

"I am aware that some of the same people have given me a similar welcome – I've seen the posters – but I am pleased that in the new environment in Sri Lanka, all voices, including the moderate voices of civil society, can at last be heard, even if sometimes the voices of hatred and bigotry are still shouting the loudest, and as a result are perhaps being listened to more

ous complexity, and the early years are crucial. If mistakes are made, or significant problems are downplayed or ignored during the first few years, they become progressively harder to sort out as time goes on," he warned. "While the glass is still molten, if you are quick and skilful, you can shape it into a fine object that will last for years."

Turning to the proposed Constitutional reform, which should ensure that the rights of all Sri Lankans are fully recognised, Mr. Zeid said there are fears that at a later stage this may be achieved "at the expense of other equally important processes such as truth-telling, justice and accountability."

"While the Task Force appointed to lead the National Consultation process includes high quality representatives



UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, briefs the media at the UN Compound in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Photo: © UN Sri Lanka/Muradh Mohideen

of civil society, there are concerns – including among the Task Force members themselves – that the process is too rushed and has not been properly planned or adequately resourced," he noted, highlighting measures that could be taken quickly to reverse this "trend of draining confidence."

Implementing Human Rights Council resolution

Meanwhile, he said issues relating to implementation of a resolution adopted by the UN Human Rights Council last October were high on his agenda during this trip. Co-sponsored by Sri Lanka and agreed with the consensus of all 47 Council members, it laid out an "eminently sensible pathway for the country to follow," with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) charged with following up on its implementation.

"The Human Rights Council resolution was in many ways a reflection of the reform agenda that Sri Lankans had voted for in last year's Presidential and Parliamentary elections. It sets out some of the tough steps that must be taken to achieve reconciliation and accountability and, through them, lasting peace," Mr. Zeid stressed.

"There are many myths and misconceptions about the resolution, and what it means for Sri Lanka. It is not a gratuitous attempt to interfere with or undermine the country's sovereignty or independence. It is not some quasi-colonial act by some nebulous foreign power. The acceptance of the resolution was a moment of strength, not weakness, by Sri Lanka" he insisted, adding

that it was the country's commitment to both itself and to the world to confront the past honestly and, by doing that, take out comprehensive insurance against any future devastating outbreak of inter communal tensions and conflict.

"I urge all Sri Lankans to make an effort to understand what that resolution and the report underpinning it actually say, and I urge all those in a position to do so, to make a greater effort to explain why the recommendations are so important, and why the United Nations and all those individual States – Sri Lanka included – endorsed them," he continued.

The human rights chief told reporters the resolution suggests international participation in the accountability mechanisms set up to deal with international crimes and gross human rights violations committed by individuals on both sides.

"This is a practical proposal to solve the very real and practical problems I mentioned earlier. But it is only one aspect – albeit a very important one – of the broad range of measures outlined in the 2015 UN report and resolution, and the extent to which it has been allowed to dominate the debate in Sri Lanka in recent days is unfortunate," he said.

Concluding his remarks, Mr. Zeid said the international community wants to welcome Sri Lanka back into its fold without any lingering reservations and help Sri Lanka become an economic powerhouse.

– UN.org





# Meet the 106-Year-Old Who Got to Dance with the President and the First Lady

By Melanie Garunay

Virginia McLaurin, 106 years old and a longtime Washington, D.C. resident, had always dreamed of visiting the White House. Recently, her dream came true in a big way.

Here's how Virginia McLaurin got to the White House:

A friend of Mrs. McLaurin's reached out to the White House and shared that Mrs. McLaurin has been doing stellar work as a volunteer throughout the D.C. area for decades and would like to visit the White House. So the White House made sure that she not only got to visit -- but also had the chance, before the Black History Month reception, to meet privately with the President and First Lady backstage. It was her dream to meet President Obama, given his passion for investing in early childhood education and his significance as the first African American President.

Virginia McLaurin is a Senior Corps volunteer at Roots Public Charter School as part of the United Planning Organization's Foster Grandparent Program, serving as a foster grandparent and mentor to special-needs students. As a mentor, she helps children with their reading and social skills.

Virginia has volunteered at C. Melvin Sharpe Health School for over 20 years, serving 40 hours a week. She was introduced to the program by a friend from her church who knew Virginia was interested in finding ways to make life better for those in her community. - [whitehouse.gov](http://whitehouse.gov)



President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama greet 106-year-old Virginia McLaurin during a photo line in the Blue Room of the White House prior to a reception celebrating African American History Month, Feb. 18, 2016. (Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson)

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# Bees can help boost food security of two billion small farmers at no cost - UN

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on 19th of February highlighted the publication of a new study that quantifies, for the first time, how much crop yields depend on the work of bees that unknowingly fertilize plants as they move from flower to flower.

In doing so, the agency says bees may have a key role to play in improving the production of some two billion smallholder farmers worldwide and ensuring the food security and nutrition of the world's growing population.

"What do cucumbers, mustard, almonds and alfalfa have in common?" asked FAO in a press release. "On the surface, very little; but there is one thing they share: they all owe their existence to the service of bees."

The agency notes that for centuries, this tiny striped helper has labored the world's fields without winning much recognition for its many contributions to food production. Wild bees, in particular, seemed doomed to slog in the shadow of their more popular cousin – the honeybee – whose day job of producing golden nectar has been far more visible and celebrated.

But FAO says bees of all stripes are finally getting their moment in the sun. The paper, published in the magazine Science, makes the case that ecological intensification – or boosting farm outputs by tapping the power of natural processes – is one of the sustainable pathways toward greater food supplies.

Food security strategies worldwide could therefore benefit from including pollination as integral component, experts say.

"Our research shows that improving pollinator density and diversity – in other words, making sure that more and more different types of bees and insects are coming to your plants – has direct impact on crop yields," said Barbara Gemmill-Herren, one of the FAO authors of the report.

"And that's good for the environment and for food security," she stressed, adding that it is beneficial to actively preserve and build habitats in and around farms for bees, birds and insects to live year-round.

## Focus on developing countries

In the field study coordinated by FAO, scientists compared 344 plots across Africa, Asia and Latin America and concluded that crop yields were significantly lower in farming plots that attracted fewer bees during the main flowering season than in those plots that received more visits.

When comparing high-performing

and low-performing farms of less than two hectares, the outcomes suggest that poorly performing farms could increase their yields by a median of 24 per cent by attracting more pollinators to their land.

The research also looked at larger plots and concluded that, while those fields also benefited from more pollinator visits, the impact on yields was less significant than in the smaller plots – probably because many bees have a harder time servicing large fields, far from their nesting habitat. But a diversity of bees, each with different flight capacities, can make the difference.

This suggests that bee diversity offers benefits both for small-holder farmers in developing countries, and for larger farms.

## Why it matters

The research comes at a time when wild bees are threatened by a multitude of factors and managed bee populations can't keep up with the increasing number of plots that grow pollination-dependent crops. Climate change poses yet another problem: "Bees will struggle with the higher temperatures," explained Nadine Azzu, Global Project Coordinator in FAO's Plant Production and Protection Division, who also worked on the report. "Plus, flowers in some parts of the world are now opening at different times than they used to, and the bees are not there to pollinate," she said.

This means finding ways to keep pollinators buzzing around the farm year-round is becoming even more important.

## Previously unstudied

Pollinators – such as bees, birds and various types of insects that fly, hop or crawl from one flower to another – have for centuries been the invisible helpers of farmers worldwide.

Different types of bees have distinct tastes and roles to play in the food system. Bumble bees, for example, are one



A new study suggests that poorly performing farms could significantly increase their crop yields by attracting more pollinators to their land. Photo: FAO/James Cane

of the few types of bees that can successfully pollinate tomatoes, which heavily rely on buzz pollination to bear fruit.

Honey bees, in turn, are important because they are the least picky in their choice of flowers – and there are many of them, in each hive, even though their more discerning wild bee cousins are more effective in fertilizing the plants they're attracted to.

The study shows that for smallholdings, crop yield increased linearly with increased visits to the flowers that were being tracked. Pollination was the agricultural input that contributed the greatest to yields, beyond other management practices.

This holds promise for one of the major agricultural challenges of our time: How to help smallholders produce more without hurting the environment.

## How to attract bees

The report also found that attracting pollinators to farms is not as easy as planting for the season and waiting for them to arrive.

Maintaining habitat and forage resources all year long is key to wooing pollinators and keeping them on the land for longer periods of time. This can be done by planting different trees and plants that flower at different times in the year, for example.

Maintaining flowering hedge rows around the farm, and mulch on the ground that bees can hide under, are additional recommended tactics to attract them, as is reducing the use of pesticides.

The key to getting the best yields probably lies in a mix of managed pollination services – that is, installing bee hives in plots at flowering time – and wild pollination, experts say.

And the latter will require farmers and policy makers to take a closer look at the ecosystems that surround farms.

"The take away from our study is that bees provide a real service and should be taken into account when we plan food security interventions," said Ms. Azzu. "And the best part is: their service is free."

– UN.org

## Two surgeons of Sri Lankan origin perform groundbreaking surgery in UK

By Siva Sivapragasam

Two Doctors of Sri Lankan origin have become the first to undergo groundbreaking surgery being rolled out at Colchester General Hospital in U.K.

Tan Arulampalam, a consultant surgeon based at Colchester General Hospital, and Raj Rajaganesan, a consultant colorectal surgeon at St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, carried out the surgery.

These two surgeons are the first in the east of England to adapt the way they treat pilonidal sinus, a small cyst or abscess in the cleft at the top of the but-

tock. Small incisions rather than larger cuts were made during surgery on both men, meaning less pain, a reduced risk of infection and faster recovery.

The patients, aged 16 and 28, went home on the day of surgery.

The operation involves using a special endoscope through which a camera and surgical instruments can be passed.

The surgeon operates while looking at images on a monitor.

Dr. Arulampalam said: "These new operations help to enhance Colchester's reputation as a centre of excellence for minimally-invasive surgery.



"They are being carried out in one of our laparoscopic theatres and are performed in only a handful of hospitals in the UK.

"Dr. Rajaganesan has performed more of these operations than any other surgeon in the UK and I am proud to say that he did some of his training here in Colchester about five years ago."





# Quality education in mother languages vital to success of 2030 Agenda - UN

Mother languages are essential to providing quality education, which in turn supports the achievement of the new global development agenda, the head of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said on the International Day established to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by peoples of the world.

Marking International Mother Language Day on 21 February, UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova emphasized that “mother languages in a multilingual approach are essential components of quality education, which is itself the foundation for empowering women and men and their societies.”

She underscored the need to recognize and nurture this power, in order to “leave no one behind” and “craft a more just and sustainable future for all.”

This year’s theme of the Mother Language Day is “quality education, language(s) of instruction and learning outcomes,” she said.

Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development focuses on qual-

ity education and lifelong learning for all, to enable every woman and man to acquire skills, knowledge, and values to become everything they wish and participate fully in their societies, she said, noting that this is especially important for girls and women, as well as minorities, indigenous peoples, and rural populations.

UNESCO’s Education 2030 Framework for Action, a road-map to implement the 2030 Agenda, encourages full respect for the use of mother language in teaching and learning, and the promotion and preservation of linguistic diversity, noted Ms. Bokova.

“Multilingualism is essential to drive these objectives forward – it is vital for success across the 2030 Agenda, regarding growth, employment and health, as well as sustainable consumption and production, and climate change,” she said.

UNESCO brings the same focus to advancing linguistic diversity on the Internet, through support to relevant local content as well as media and information literacy, explained Ms.



Schoolchildren in Chowrapara, Rangpur, Bangladesh. Photo: UNICEF/Tapash Paul

Bokova. Through the Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) programme, UNESCO is highlighting the importance of mother and local languages as channels for safeguarding and sharing indigenous cultures and knowledge, which are vast reservoirs of wisdom.

International Mother Language Day was proclaimed by the UNESCO General Conference in November 1999,

and has been observed every year since February 2000 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. The date represents the day in 1952 when students demonstrating for recognition of their language, Bangla, as one of the two national languages of the then Pakistan, were shot and killed by police in Dhaka, the capital of what is now Bangladesh.

- UN.org



**Deepa Balachandran**, B.A. (Hons.), B. Ed., J.D.

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\*Please note: The material on this advertisement is not intended as legal advice. If you are the alleged victim/complainant (not the person charged), I cannot offer advice. Please contact your local Victims Services office for assistance.



# Fiji: UNICEF steps up response as 'full picture' of Cyclone Winston's impact becomes clearer

As the full picture of the worst cyclone ever to hit Fiji becomes more apparent, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that up to 120,000 children across the county may be badly affected.

UNICEF officials say that the trauma of the event itself must not be underestimated, and many children have been affected by varying degrees of loss, including the devastation of losing family or community members, the sadness of losing homes or belongings, and the danger of losing places of critical importance to their development, such as schools and health centres. In addition, there are many dangers at play in a post-emergency situation, such as increasing levels of stagnant water that are a breeding ground for diseases like diarrhoea.

"Children are often the most vulnerable during emergencies and UNICEF continues to support the Government of Fiji's efforts in addressing the needs of children," said UNICEF Pacific Representative Karen Allen.

UNICEF Pacific's Joseph Hing, who travelled with the first shipment of emergency supplies to Koro Island, one of the areas worst affected by Tropical

Cyclone Winston, said that "the damage to Koro Island is extensive and the scale of the destruction is overwhelming," he said. "I spoke to countless people who have lost everything. Their lives have been turned utterly upside down."

A grandmother, whose young grandson was nearly swept away by the storm surge, told him that "you can lose all your material belongings, but what's more important is our lives," he said.

The geographic make-up of Fiji and the logistical challenges involved in completing assessments of the outer islands pose many barriers, but each day brings more progress, the officials said.

The UN agency is continuing to work in close partnership with Fiji's Government and other partners to ensure a coordinated and strategic emergency response.

Within the first 24 hours of the request of the Government for assistance, UNICEF provided 3,000 people in the worst affected areas with water, sanitation and hygiene supplies to ensure safe drinking water and delivered education supplies to 995 students of eight schools in the Lau and Lomaiviti

groups.

Emergency health kits, to service a population of 1,000 people for 3 months, as well as tents and education supplies, funded by the New Zealand Government, are being distributed to worst-affected outer islands. On Wednesday night, health supplies which included vitamin A capsules, oral rehydration salts, zinc tablets and six basic health kits were loaded onto boats departing for Gau Island and Batiki Island.

The Australian Government has donated to UNICEF hygiene kits for 7,920 people and water purification tabs for 1,066 household.

However, funding is needed to sustain and scale up this response, the officials say.

"More heartening though are the stories we are hearing of heroism and the very best of humanity," Ms Allen said, noting that "Fijians are renowned



13 year-old Makereta Nasiki sits in her room, showing damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Winston in the town of Ba on Viti Levu Island of Fiji (24 February 2016).

Photo: UNICEF/UN011243/Sokhin

for the kindness and generosity and we are seeing nothing but solidarity and shared commitment to recover together." - UN.org

(Cyclone Winston was the strongest tropical cyclone to make landfall over Fiji on record. The system was first noted as a tropical disturbance on 7 February 2016, when it was located to the northwest of Port Vila, Vanuatu. Over the next few days, the system gradually developed as it moved southeast, acquiring gale-force winds by 11 February. The following day, it underwent rapid intensification and attained ten-minute maximum sustained winds of 175 km/h (110 mph). - wikipedia.org)

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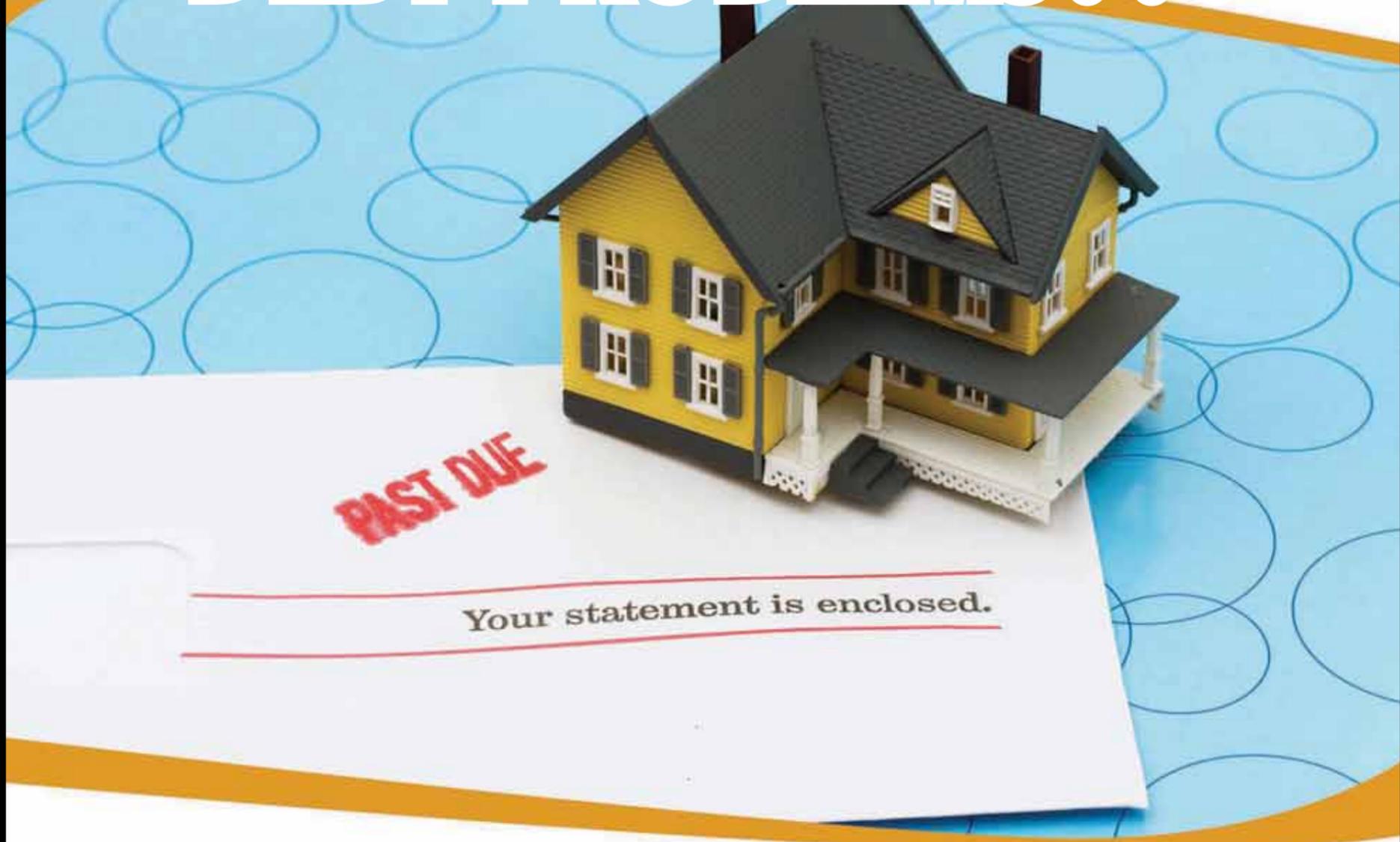
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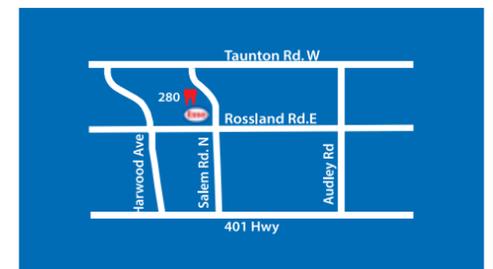
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# Putting hearts in rhythm at Rouge Valley

## New cardiac cryoballoon ablation procedure helps patients with heart arrhythmia

Thanks to an innovative new technology at Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS), airline pilot Stephen Wilcox is flying high – literally.

Previously grounded by a heart arrhythmia, or irregular heartbeat, he is clear to fly once again.

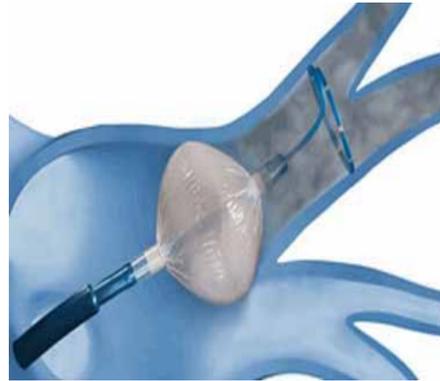
“At night, I would lie on the pillow, and hear my odd heartbeat missing beats,” says the 54-year-old Durham resident. “After I would have an episode like this, my heart would pause for 7 to 8 seconds before finally going back to beating normally.”

Wilcox was suffering from a type of arrhythmia called atrial fibrillation, or AF, which occurs when there is disorganized electrical activity in the top chambers of the heart, causing an irregular heart rhythm. This can lead to a feeling of racing heart rate, irregular or skipped heartbeats, fatigue/tiredness, shortness of breath, chest discomfort, dizziness, and even fainting.

Thanks to the new cryoballoon ablation therapy procedure offered through the Central East Regional Cardiac Care Program, patients like Wilcox can now get care closer to home. This procedure is specifically designed to treat AF, using freezing to treat the specific heart cells that are causing the abnormal beating. A balloon catheter is inserted into the affected heart chamber, and is inflated and filled with liquid nitrous oxide. This freezes the balloon, which is in contact with the targeted heart tissue. Often 3D-mapping technology will also be used to visualize the inside of the heart and precisely guide the balloon and ablation. The procedure is fast and effective, and can minimize radiation and anaesthesia.

This specialized service is performed at the regional cardiac care centre located at Rouge Valley Centenary (RVC) hospital campus, which features three catheterization labs and a designated procedure room for arrhythmia treatments. This is where Stephen Wilcox was referred and treated by RVHS cardiologist Dr. Derek Yung, who along with Dr. Bhavanesh Makanjee, are amongst the most experienced operators with the cryoballoon in the province. Dr. Makanjee and Dr. Yung work in collaboration at the cardiac centre with Dr. Amir Janmohamed, director of electrophysiology at RVHS, and Dr. Ted Davies, electrophysiologist with The Scarborough Hospital.

“We want to get the message out — if you have symptoms like palpitations or fainting, talk to your doctor for a referral,” says Dr. Makanjee. “The cryo-



balloon ablation procedure is quick, safe, and effective.”

For Wilcox, the procedure was a perfect success, giving him relief when other therapies and treatments could not. “The procedure was a very positive experience for me. Within six months of the diagnosis, after having what felt like every test known to man, thanks to cryoballoon ablation the problem was solved. How does it get better than that?”

Patients with AF or who are experiencing issues of irregular heartbeat should discuss their condition with their family doctor, and can contact the arrhythmia management clinic at RVHS at 416-284-8131 ext. 5327 to learn more about arrhythmia services or if cryoballoon ablation therapy is right for them.

About the Central East Regional Cardiac Care Program

Rouge Valley Health System is home to the Central East Regional Cardiac Care Program for Durham and Scarborough. With a highly qualified and experienced team of more than 20 cardiologists and over 100 health-care professionals, the regional program is integrated with the community to ensure excellent, timely care. Each year, more than 6,000 patients are seen by the program for a wide range of cardiac care services, including life-saving emergency and elective interventions to unblock blood vessels in the heart; advanced cardiac imaging to get a better view of what’s happening with a patient’s heart; pacemaker and ICD implants and electrophysiology procedures to manage and treat arrhythmias (irregular heartbeats); and cardiovascular rehabilitation and education to help patients throughout the broader Central East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) region to achieve an optimal heart-healthy lifestyle. As the designated cardiac care centre for the regional program, Rouge Valley delivers care in partnership with The Scarborough Hospital, Lakeridge Health, and the Central East LHIN.

# Rouge Valley invites children to learn about hospital at Teddy Bear Clinic

## Annual March Break event helps kids to be more comfortable with coming to the hospital

A free March Break event invites children from Scarborough and west Durham to bring one of their stuffed animals for a checkup at their local hospital.

The fourth annual Teddy Bear Clinic will take place on Tuesday, March 15 at Rouge Valley Centenary hospital campus, and on Thursday, March 17 at Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering hospital campus. This interactive event features a series of stations where Rouge Valley staff and volunteers will teach children about many of the different kinds of activities and procedures that happen at the hospital. Children can bring their Teddy (or other stuffed toy) to “receive” x-rays, blood tests, surgery and more.

“By using their stuffed animal as a ‘patient,’ children are able to learn more about coming to the hospital in a fun, friendly and relaxed way. That’s what the Teddy Bear Clinic is all about,” says Alexandra Frankel, child life specialist in the paediatric program at Rouge Valley. “Our hope is that with this knowledge, children will feel more confident and empowered when they need to see a doctor or make a trip to the hospital, whether it is a routine visit or an emergency situation.”

### EVENT DETAILS

**What:** Teddy Bear Clinic

**Who:** For children between the ages of three and 12

**When & Where:** Tuesday, March 15  
Start times at either  
10 a.m. or 1 p.m.

Rouge Valley Centenary (2867 Elles-

mere Road in Scarborough), cafeteria (third floor)

Thursday, March 17, 10 a.m.

Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering (580 Harwood Ave. S. in Ajax), cafeteria (ground floor)

**Cost:** FREE!

**How to register:** Spaces are limited. Register online for the event at [www.rougevalley.ca/teddybearclinic](http://www.rougevalley.ca/teddybearclinic). You may also contact Alexandra Frankel at 416-284-8131 ext. 4091 or at [afrankel@rougevalley.ca](mailto:afrankel@rougevalley.ca).

**Note:** A parent or guardian must be with the child throughout the event.

### Paediatrics at Rouge Valley Health System

Rouge Valley Health System specializes in child and adolescent health care. Paediatric care is offered at both hospital campuses, ensuring that children in Scarborough and west Durham have access to quality care that is close to home. Rouge Valley features a range of paediatrics services, including: special care for newborns; paediatric subspecialty clinics including gastroenterology, diabetes, nephrology, neurology, rheumatology, hematology and Sickle Cell and neonatal follow-up; a paediatric day surgery program; a paediatric oncology satellite clinic, run in partnership with the Hospital for Sick Children; and the Shoniker Clinic, specializing in the assessment and treatment services for young people with significant mental health challenges. Learn more about Rouge Valley’s paediatric services at [www.rougevalley.ca/paediatrics](http://www.rougevalley.ca/paediatrics).

# Rouge Valley Health System supports Ontario Budget

Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS) welcomes the 2016 Ontario Budget, calling it positive news for the growing regions of Scarborough, Pickering, Seaton, Ajax and Whitby.

“These investments will go a long way towards supporting the Scarborough and west Durham community,” says RVHS president and CEO Andrée Robichaud. “Rouge Valley Health System is proud to serve as a leader in health-care services for our community. This money will help improve hospital programs and focus on the needs of patients and their families.”

Last week, the Government announced an increase of \$345 million in 2016/17 for Ontario’s hospitals. This includes an investment of \$175 million to provide patients with access to more

services in new and redeveloped hospitals and \$160 million to improve access and wait times for hospital services. The Hospital Infrastructure Renewal Fund (HIRF) will also grow by \$50 million.

While individual hospital allocations are not yet known, Rouge Valley’s two hospital campuses – Rouge Valley Centenary and Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering — will continue to increase hospital efficiency while also enhancing access and quality of care across the Scarborough and west Durham community.

“Rouge Valley Health System is committed to providing the best quality of care for our patients,” says Robichaud. “This is good news for our community and good news for Ontario hospitals.”

# TSH BROCHURE SUMMARIZES EXPERT PANEL REPORT

On December 18, 2015, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care released the Report of the Scarborough-West Durham Expert Panel. The Expert Panel's recommendations will advance the health services for the Scarborough community and will offer better and more equitable access to care for the Scarborough community. TSH supports the recommendations, which put the needs of patients and communities first.

We have developed a

brochure that summarizes the key recommendations and highlights of this report. This brochure is also available in Chinese and Tamil.

We believe it is particularly important to encourage community members and service providers to take the time to write or contact the Minister of Health, Dr. Eric Hoskins, as well as their local MPPs.

To view/download the brochure, visit the Expert Panel section at [www.tsh.to](http://www.tsh.to).



## TSH SELECTED AS ONE OF CANADA'S BEST DIVERSITY EMPLOYERS FOR 2016

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH) has been selected as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers for 2016 in the Canada's Top 100 Employers competition.

"Congratulations go out to the entire team at TSH for this truly exceptional honour," said Robert Biron, President and CEO of TSH.

"Our staff, physicians, volunteers, and partners have worked hard to make diversity, equity, and inclusion a fundamental part of how we operate at TSH. This in turn allows us to improve patient experiences and patient outcomes by deeply understanding each person's unique needs."

Rhonda Lewis, Vice President of Human Resources and Patient Relations at TSH, adds that the hospital "was one of the first in Ontario to dedicate a department and a director to meet the needs of our diverse community over twenty years ago. Today, the hospital's Vision is 'to be recognized as Canada's leader in providing the best health care for a global community.' Diversity,



equity, and inclusion are also key priorities within our strategic plan."

This steadfast dedication has contributed to a great number of successful initiatives for staff, physicians, volunteers, patients, and families, including:

- ▶ A dynamic curriculum for staff around diversity, equity, and inclusion, including mandatory training for management on how to lead a diverse workforce.

- ▶ A dramatic rise in employee engagement scores in the hospital's Employee Opinion Survey, which now

exceed Ontario Hospital Association levels. Diversity is identified as a key strength by staff in these surveys.

- ▶ The opening of the innovative Global Community Resource Centre in 2012 in partnership with community agencies in Scarborough to support patients and families with increased health literacy and better access to community services.

- ▶ A comprehensive interpretation program for patients, including full-time interpreters at the General and Birchmount campuses and telephone interpretation available 24/7 in all clinical areas in over 200 languages.

- ▶ Leading more than 1,000 community outreach and engagement activities since 2009 to help the community better understand their health care options, navigate services, and provide input on hospital programs and services.

In 2015, TSH also received national recognition for its efforts to create and promote diversity and inclusion as the recipient of the 2015 National

Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award from the Canadian College of Health Leaders.

Now entering its 10th year, the Canada's Best Diversity Employers competition recognizes the nation's leaders in creating inclusive workplaces for employees from five diverse groups: women; visible minorities; persons with disabilities; Aboriginal peoples; and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) peoples. Employers are selected by the editors at MediCorp Canada Inc. based on submissions to the annual Canada's Top 100 Employers project, which has been published annually since 1999.

This year's winners were announced February 24 in a special magazine published in The Globe and Mail. An online magazine incorporates additional photos, stories, and testimonials from the winners. Detailed reasons for TSH's selection as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers can be found at <http://content.eluta.ca/top-employer-scarborough-hospital>.

## BRAVE T.O.

# Do you have what it takes to beat the best?



Mark your calendar and lace up your running shoes. A new breed of obstacle race is coming to Scarborough and you can go head-to-head with the best of Toronto's police, paramedics and firefighters.

BRAVE T.O., a totally new adventure race presented by The Scarborough Hospital Foundation, comes to Morningside Park on September 24, 2016. "BRAVE T.O. will create a destination event in Scarborough," explained Michael Mazza, President and CEO of The Scarborough Hospital Foundation. "The event will raise crucial funds that will help us create the best

health care for our global community.

The race will be designed based on the programs that Toronto Police, Fire, and Emergency Services use to recruit, train, and test their teams.

From rope climbs to wall scrambles – racers will be tested to their max throughout the course.

"The race will challenge both professional adventure racers and regular Joes," said Mazza. "And it will be a great chance to see how we do when we compete against the best of Toronto's emergency responders."

Please visit [www.brave.to](http://www.brave.to) for more information. Registration opens on March 28, 2016 at noon.



# SENIOR CARE FOR TAMILS IN ONTARIO



By: *Shanthiya Baheerathan*

*Cookie exchange exhibition by Senior Tamils Centre members were held at Burrows Hall Community Centre on the 4th of March 2016-pic via: [facebook.com/SeniorTamilsCentreofOntario](https://www.facebook.com/SeniorTamilsCentreofOntario)*

There exist major gaps in service-provision of senior care in Ontario, and these gaps are wider for immigrant populations. When considering the Toronto Tamil senior experience, their unique needs around culturally sensitive services further set back their access to government-funded, quality health care. To account for this gap, some Tamil seniors are turning to their cultural communities to provide services. However, not all Tamil seniors can access these privately funded programs and these programs cannot always provide the necessary care. To create a more equitable health system, Tamil seniors and members of the community must start advocating for culturally sensitive and accessible care for our seniors. The ministry of health is asking for input in designing the future of client-centered care, and it is an opportune time to get involved.

Seniors are the largest group of health care service users, accounting for 50% of provincial health care spending. In 2011, the Canadian census found that 15% of the population was over the age of 65, a proportion that was projected to increase to 20% by 2025. However, while the needs of the system are growing, hospital funding has been frozen for the past four years and Ontario's government has decided to slow down total spending by reducing the rate of increase to 1% every year. Instead of spending more, the government hopes to make the system more efficient through pushing better home care, integrated services, and client-centered care. However, the system still remains too reliant on an expensive acute care system for seniors. Moreover, while eliminating inefficiencies is a good idea, the government must also consider this problem in aging immigrant populations and account for the unique needs that accompany that context.

Social determinants of health indicate that Tamil seniors in Canada exist at multiple intersections of identity that prevent them from accessing care. While there exist very few studies on Toronto Tamil senior populations, social determinants of health in immigrant, non-English speaking and racialized populations in Canada indicate sub optimal health outcomes. For example, 2008 statistics about accessing health care show 17% of men and 30% of women who did not speak French or English and 37% of women and 20% the men of the South, West Asian and Arab population reported difficulties accessing primary health care, and access was further impeded when they tried to access non-emergent and specialist care. When socio economic status, language skills, and health behaviour compound with the previous determinants, the health access and outcomes of



Tamil seniors become even worse. These stats must be accounted for when designing accessible health and long-term care.

However, it is also important to note that Tamil seniors are not homogenous. Tamil seniors face different levels of difficulty interacting with the health care system, based on immigration status, where they live in the GTA, whether they are a refugee or family sponsored, length of time in Canada, level of education, financial backgrounds, physical mobility, transportation access, level of family support, their social circles, financial status of their children, and more. For example, I met two completely different seniors last week. The first I met when I attended a community meeting at a local non-profit that provides educational seminars, fitness classes, and community gatherings for Tamil seniors in Markham. She had moved to Canada three years ago, couldn't yet qualify for a pension, lived in the basement of her son's home and rarely spoke with him or his family. On a different end of the spectrum, I met Tamil senior in Mississauga who had moved to Canada in the eighties and spoke fluent English, she has a pension and both of her children are now well off and could support her financially. There were some overlapping struggles with transportation to health service providers and concerns about future mobility issues or becoming a burden on their children, but their experiences with the health care system are also different. One of them is able to speak about her concerns to non-Tamil specialists, while the other struggles with even making an appointment. (To account for these discrepancies in design, when designing systems and services, we must act from a place of universal design that accounts of the most marginalized.)

To account for a health care system that excludes non-speaking immigrants of colour,

the Tamil community has been very innovative in designing alternate programming and Tamil not-for-profits are admirably attempting to take the government's responsibilities. There exist multiple Tamil seniors' centers across the GTA and numerous projects that educate seniors around preventative lifestyles and provide fitness classes. However, while these programs are necessary, there remain problems around access to home care through the CCAC, and access to primary care physicians. Every Tamil senior I have interviewed over the past month have indicated that despite programming through not-for-profits, there remained barriers to access such as language-barriers, transportation issues, lack of finances, or lack of social support systems. Ultimately, we need to create a health care system that looks at access to health care at every step of the way, instead of building alternatives.

In December 2015 the Ministry of Health released an ambitious discussion paper titled "Patients First a Proposal to Strengthen Patient-Centered Health Care in Ontario", pushing a client and caregiver-centered approach, integrated services and high-quality care delivery at home and in the community. The report identifies that "members of other cultural groups, particularly newcomers, may struggle to get the health care they need. As part of our commitment to health equity, they system must be able to recognize the challenges that newcomers face and provide culturally appropriate care and timely access." The specific barriers to access by Immigrant communities, including the Tamil community were not identified, but the proposal concludes by saying "with this paper, we are seeing our input on our proposal, and your advice about how to integrate our improvements".

It has been well documented, that when communities fail to access essential services from formal systems, they turn inwards, to their social support systems and cultural enclaves for support (SPC Ottawa, 2010). This phenomenon can be very clearly seen in the Toronto Tamil population, which has created an internal eco-system where enterprise and social, religious, and even health services are created and sustained. While this necessary adaptation speaks to our community's entrepreneurship and resilience, we should do this while simultaneously demanding equitable essential services from our government through advocacy and civic engagement.

If you are interested immigrant senior health, and are in getting involved in this process, please contact me at [sbaheerathan@marsdd.com](mailto:sbaheerathan@marsdd.com).



# PROVIDENCE HEALTHCARE RECEIVES DISTINCTION AWARD FOR STROKE PROGRAM

Toronto's Providence Healthcare has achieved Stroke Distinction from Accreditation Canada for its inpatient stroke services. The decision followed Accreditation Canada's on-site survey in December as part of an ongoing accreditation process.

"I am so proud of everyone in our stroke and neuro rehab program, and the whole team involved in pursuing this recognition," said Josie Walsh, president and



CEO of Providence Healthcare. "We work hard to ensure we provide our community with health care services that are safe, effective and of the highest quality. But the outcome – that our patients flourish as a result – is what matters most."

Health care accreditation helps identify what an organization is doing well and where to focus its improvement efforts. Evaluated against national standards, Providence achieved 100 per cent compliance and will use the results to continue to improve the quality and safety of its services.

"I extend my sincere congratulations to the entire staff at Providence Healthcare," said Suzanne Larocque, interim president and CEO of Accreditation Canada. "This award of Stroke Distinction demonstrates the organization's outstanding commitment

to excellence in stroke care for the benefit of its patients."

During the site visit, accreditors highlighted Providence's leadership in providing seamless patient flow. Patients and their families experience a smooth transition from acute care hospitals to begin their rehab at Providence. The experience continues when patients return home, where they are supported by scheduled follow up calls from Providence staff. Accreditors also noted the program's high staff morale, which support excellent rates of patient satisfaction.

"Achieving Stroke Distinction is a testament to the fact that everyone here is patient-focused and makes quality and safety a priority every day," added Walsh.

Located at St. Clair and Warden Avenues, Providence Healthcare is a leader in providing rehabilitation, palliative care, long-term care and community programs. Providence Hospital offers inpatient and outpatient programs to over 5,000 individuals each year; the Cardinal

Ambrozic Houses of Providence provides long-term care to 288 residents; and Providence's caregiver support and education programs reach out to thousands in the broader community through services such as our Adult Day Program. For more information on Providence, visit [www.providence.on.ca](http://www.providence.on.ca).



REHAB-IN-ACTION



*Providence Healthcare's accreditation team leads (L-R) Jacqueline Lumsden, Jennifer Joachimides, Sharon Crossan and Gene Norvaisa with Accreditation Canada surveyors Dr. Brian Warriner and Jan Narduzzi.*



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# YOGA: Keeping the Mind and Body Young



**By: Andrea Shanmugarajah**

Yoga originated in India, with the purpose of achieving self-enlightenment through meditation and positive thinking. However, since its conception, the practice of yoga has spread across the world, and is now practiced by people of all cultures and ages. Even the purpose of yoga has shifted, as different aspects of yoga have been emphasized by different people, and the focus on maintaining a healthy body and mind has increased. The widespread practice of such an ancient and traditional cultural practice is remarkable – what is it about yoga that has allowed it to become so popular in a global fashion? The fact is, yoga is able to provide people with both the gratification of seeing immediate results in their physical and mental capabilities as well as long-term improvement of their well-being. The benefits of yoga are far-reaching, and this article will



outline exactly what those benefits are, and how taking up the practice of yoga can help you.

One of the virtues of yoga is that it does not discriminate – yoga truly is for everyone. Anyone can learn yoga, regardless of their age and fitness level, though it is of course possible to tailor your yoga experience to your own personal needs. On top of meeting the physical demands of every person, yoga is also able to adapt to your time constraints and lifestyle choices. Yoga can be practiced privately in your home, it can be learned from a DVD, or you can go to a gym or yoga studio to learn. There are all sorts of forms of yoga available to be learned, such as hot yoga, relaxation yoga and power yoga. Ultimately, you will be able to determine what you hope to get out of yoga, and what aspects of yoga you would like to focus on, and then find a place for yourself in yoga, regardless of your own personal characteristics and limitations.

Unlike other physical or mental activities, which focus on one aspect of our well-being, yoga encourages overall wellness and a complete healthy life-

style. Yoga helps us to relieve stress and clear our minds through breathing exercises and meditation, which allow us to transfer our focus from daily banalities and achieve tranquility. We can achieve peace of mind through yoga, and as a result, we will see ourselves become happier and more confident. Yoga also helps us increase our strength and flexibility, which leaves us both feeling and looking good. Each yoga pose is designed to reinforce certain muscles of the body, and alleviate pain. After a short time practising yoga, you will find your posture to be improved, and your core strength will continue to increase. By taking your joints through the full range of motion, as one does in yoga, you can prevent wearing out or your joints and cartilage that comes from disuse. Yoga will also help increase your circulation, and get your blood flowing to your peripheries, such as your hands and feet. Specific forms of yoga have also been shown to have more specialized effects on physical health, such as improved immunity, lowered blood sugar or blood sugar, and improvement of digestive function. If you are looking to particularly work

on one of these areas, look into the type of yoga that is best suited to your needs.

It is clear that there are a number of benefits to practicing yoga, and that these benefits can be felt on a physical, mental and spiritual level. If you want to keep both your mind and body feeling young, I encourage you to look into beginning yoga. Amazingly, starting yoga as a beginner does not necessarily require many resources. While there are classes available, you can also practice yoga from the comfort of your own home. There is a slew of information online about the practice of yoga, and the importance of various aspects of yoga. There are also a number of educational videos available that can help you begin. Rather than be intimidated by the more intense aspects of yoga, begin with simple breathing and meditation exercises that are available online. In no time, you will start to see improvements, even from self-taught yoga, and as your own capacities increase, you can consider moving on to more advanced stages of yoga with the help of an instructor or through a yoga class.



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## WORDS OF PEACE



# Peace is a Feeling

When some people hear the word peace, they think of a quiet place such as a park or the countryside. Some imagine going on a restful vacation, away from the cares and worries of everyday life. Many think of peace as a time when people from different countries live in harmony with each other in the absence of war.

These definitions, says Prem Rawat, do not address real peace, but only symptoms.

"The whole world understands the concept of peace," he says, "but they don't truly understand what peace is. People look at the symptoms of a lack of peace, and they say, 'Let's fix the symptoms.' You cannot just keep fixing the symptoms; you need to fix the disease."

Mr. Rawat travels the globe with a message of a peace that can be found in the heart. That peace, he says, is an innate feeling that is very real—something that anyone can know, feel, experience and enjoy. It's a feeling human beings need to experience to be whole, but until we learn how to feel it, we can only know it by our need for it.

"We know that when we are hungry, our need is food," he says. "When we thirst, we know we need water. But what about the innate need we have for peace, for joy, for contentment?"

"That peace is the fundamental thing that we need. Without it, we have no future. Our children have no future. Mankind has no future

without peace, and yet that peace is the most profound—and also the simplest—thing that dances within a human being."

One day, Mr. Rawat says, a master was walking along with his student when some thieves stopped them.

"What are you carrying with you?" they asked.

"The master said, 'Oh, peace, kindness, love, knowledge, joy.'

"The thieves started laughing. They said, 'Go! Get out of here!'

"The disciple asked, 'Why did you say that?'

"Even when I say what is obvious," the master said, "there are people who will not get it. This is what I have. This is my asset—that peace, that love, that joy! But what will the thieves say? 'Ha ha ha!'"

In the same way, Mr. Rawat says, when he talks about peace, "There are people who will say, 'That's not possible in this world!'

"The good news is, the peace you are looking for is inside of you, and always will be. The day you recognize it, the day you experience it, you will start living."

Being alive, he says, is not just being able to walk or work or play.

"What happens when a person is in peace?" he asks. "There is simplicity. There is an appreciation. There is gratitude. There is recogni-

tion—a recognition that my need is the same as yours; a recognition that life isn't about power. It isn't about destruction. It is about preserving that which is precious. It is about appreciating the gift that we have been given. This is what being alive is about.

"I have never seen anyone as alive as that person who has found the passion for peace—who is embracing life, celebrating life and saying, 'Thank you for this life!'

"That person who is truly alive has a heart full of gratitude, has understanding, has a passion for peace. No confusion, but clarity about the purpose of being alive. That is when being on this Earth makes sense.

"What if you felt good on one day in your whole life, and that was it? Would that work for you? No! You need to feel good every single day—every single hour, every single minute! That's your nature. When you understand that, then you begin to feel the thirst for peace. The day you will find peace begins as the day you feel that thirst. Once you feel the thirst, the water is there."

To learn more about Prem Rawat,

1 877 707 3221 Toll free

416 431 5000 Tamil

416 264 7700 Hindi

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# Developing Spatial Awareness

By: Janani Srikantha

Spatial awareness is when a child understands their location and position of other objects in relation to their body. Also, a child's spatial awareness development involves understanding the relationship between objects when they change location. It is, in fact, an interaction between sensory systems as a child's visual system helps them perceive their surroundings and their vestibular sense allows them to understand their position in space. In addition, messages are sent between the brain and muscles to help coordinate movement. Thus, this is a complex cognitive ability that children begin to cultivate from a young age in order to make sense of their environment.

Although, for most children, spatial awareness will develop naturally, there are activities that can be done at home to promote the honing of this skill. Starting from an early age, allowing children to explore their environment helps them begin to develop their spatial awareness. In addition, it is ideal to introduce clapping songs and rhymes that identify parts of the body so babies can begin to orient themselves to their own body. As children grow, songs and games that involve different positions and movements give

them the opportunity to begin to understand concepts like location, orientation, and direction.

When they enter school age, it's essential for children to have the social opportunity to play physical games such as Tag or Dodgeball, as these games let them become aware of speed and the position of their body in relation to other people and objects. Sports provide excellent opportunities for children to develop their spatial awareness. By learning to judge the distance between their feet and the soccer ball, or the speed and direction of the shuttlecock as they plan their next hit, children continue to sharpen their spatial skills. When practicing for sports, drills that involve agility and speed with patterns that cover all directions help train the brain for spatial awareness. Children learn to adapt their movements to different rhythms and speeds, while in diverse positions, through activities such as dance and gymnastics that integrate movement to music. All these activities from when a child is a baby to when they are of school age, and even as an adult support the development of spatial awareness.

Academically, spatial reasoning is a key concept in mathematics, with the curriculum combining spatial sense and geometry. It is known that spa-

tial thinking allows children to make visual connections as they work on concepts such as transformations, create diagrams of three-dimensional figures, decompose shapes, practice non-verbal reasoning, and scale objects to be proportional in size, to name a few. Research demonstrates that spatial ability predicts success in sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics, which is commonly known as STEM in schools. Spatial reasoning is also known to be essential in the Arts and fields like architecture, graphic design, and geography among others.

In addition to exploring their environment, it is vital that we provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that utilize their spatial reasoning. Puzzles, building blocks, and art and design tasks help children of all age groups improve their spatial reasoning. At home, along with practicing number sense, include questions that involve shapes and rotations through both visual and mental representations. Numerous studies have shown that there is a causal relationship between strong spatial thinking and significantly greater overall performance in mathematics, spanning all strands including word problems, arithmetic, measurement, and even algebra and calculus as a child grows older.

As they develop their spatial skills and reasoning, children are exploring and discovering patterns in the world to engage in deeper learning of mathematics. And, when children have the knowledge and confidence to explore their world, I believe they are truly learning.

Janani Srikantha is a teacher with experience of the Ontario curriculum and the International Baccalaureate.

The education landscape is changing, and she helps parents and families to engage their child in learning. She is currently completing her graduate studies to further understand how the integration of technology is redefining how a student learns. Janani has led workshops for educators and parents on topics that address different facets of education. She also provides academic support to students through tutoring. For more information or queries on how to help your child with learning, please contact [info@thinkshiftedu.com](mailto:info@thinkshiftedu.com).



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 Special Feature

# SURYA NAMASKAR: MAKING THE BODY A STEPPING-STONE

The exuberant nightlong festival of Mahashivratri will be celebrated this year on March 7th at the Isha Yoga Center. In preparation for the event, we've put together a list of five facts to know about this night of tremendous spiritual possibilities.

## #1 There is a natural upsurge of energy in the human system

Sadhguru: The fourteenth day of every lunar month, a day before the new moon day, is referred to as Shivarathri. On this day, there is a natural upsurge in the human energy system. The Shivarathri which falls in the month of Magha in the Indian calendar (February/March) is referred to as Mahashivratri because particularly on this day, there is an assistance from nature to raise energies within the system. The whole system of yoga and spiritual process as such is about enhancing a human being from his limitations to his limitlessness. For this enhancement to happen the most fundamental process is that there is an activation, an upward movement of energy. So for all those who are aspiring to be a little more than who they are right now, Shivarathri is of significance, Mahashivratri is of particular significance.

## #2 Signifies different things to different people

Sadhguru: Mahashivratri is significant in many ways. For people who live in family situations, Mahashivratri is worshiped as Shiva's wedding anniversary. For the ascetics, it is the day he became one with Kailash, that is he became Achaleshwara and merged with the mountain. After millennia of meditation, he became as still as a mountain and became a part of it, merging and preserving all his knowing in Kailash. So ascetics see Mahashivratri as a day of stillness. The ambitious in the world see it as the day Shiva conquered all his enemies.

## #3 Keeping the spine erect throughout the night opens many possibilities

Sadhguru: Whatever the legends, the significance of the day is that there is an upward movement of energy in the human body. So this night, we want to spend awake, aware, with our spines erect so that whatever sadhana we are doing, there is a great assistance from nature. All evolution in a human being is fundamentally an upward movement of energy. Every practice, every sadhana that a spiritual sadhaka does is only to move his energies upward.

## #4 Celebrated as a night-long festival of music and dance

The exuberant nightlong festival at the Isha Yoga Center sets the ideal ambience to experience Mahashivratri, with explosive meditations and spectacular musical performances by renowned artists, drawing over a million people. In the presence of Sadhguru, this unrivaled celestial extravaganza opens up the tremendous spiritual possibilities of the night. Live performanc-



es by musical artists of international repute, interspersed with colourful cultural presentations and Isha's own home-grown band, Sounds of Isha, mark the night long celebration.

## #5 Pancha Bhuta Aradhana is performed in the presence of Sadhguru

The basis of all creation, including the physical body, are the five elements or the pancha bhuta. The wellbeing of the body and the mind can be established by purifying the five elements within the human system. This process also shapes the body to become a stepping stone towards one's ultimate wellbeing rather than being a hurdle. There is a whole system of yoga called bhuta shuddhi, meaning purification of the elements. With the Pancha Bhuta Aradhana, Sadhguru opens up a unique opportunity for devotees to benefit from this deep yogic science which would otherwise require intense sadhana.

This year, Mahashivratri falls on 7th March, 2016. The 14th day of every lunar month, the day before the Amavasya or new moon, is referred to as Shivarathri. On this night, people on the spiritual path usually perform sadhanas (spiritual practice) of special significance. Of the twelve Shivarathris that occur in a calendar year, the one that occurs in the lunar month of Magha, is called Mahashivratri because it is the most powerful of the twelve Shivarathris.

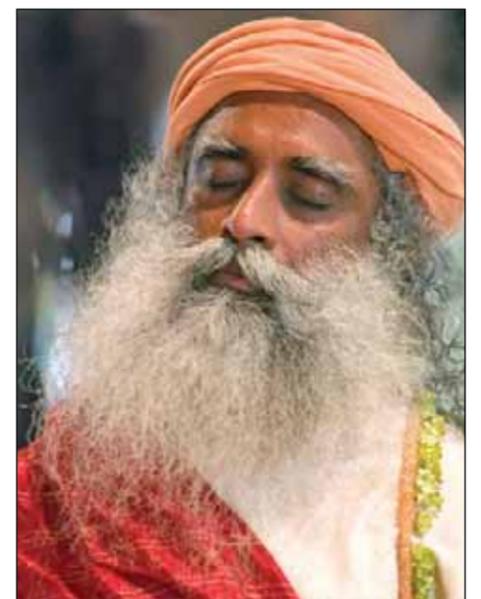
On this day, there is a huge assistance from nature itself. The planetary positions are such that it is most conducive for a person to seek his spiritual nature and raise his energy to its peak. Because of this natural upsurge of energy, there are many benefits if a person is awake with his spine in a vertical posture throughout the night. Sages, seers and many others in the history of this land have made use of this upsurge and attained to their ultimate. Even at Isha, this day is particularly significant to us for this reason.

Mahashivaratri is one of the biggest and most significant among the sacred festival nights of India. This – the darkest night of the year – celebrates the Grace of Shiva, who is considered the Adi guru or the First guru, from whom the yogic tradition originates. The planetary positions on this night are such that there is a powerful natural upsurge of energy in the human system. It is enormously beneficial for one's physical and spiritual wellbeing to stay awake and aware in a vertical position throughout the night.

Mahashivaratri is significant for people on the yogic path not only because of the natural support from nature, but also the opportunity for coming together for sadhana (spiritual practices). This is also a chance for people in family situations to take time off from mundane activities make use of the yogic processes for their own fulfillment and wellbeing. Like all Indian festivals, Mahashivratri is full of music, dance, and exuberant color. Not merely a night long celebration, Mahashivratri is an opportunity to soak in Shiva's Grace and the possibility to experience something of the beyond.

Biologists have pointed out that one of the biggest steps in the evolutionary process for an animal is to move from a horizontal to a vertical spine. It is only after this step that your intelligence flowers. So, by making use of this natural upsurge of energies on the nightlong festival of Mahashivratri, with the right kind of mantras and meditations, we can move one step closer to the Divine. The raising of energies takes place even if there is no sadhana in a person's life, but especially for those people who are into some kind of yogic sadhana, keeping the body in a vertical position, or in other words, not sleeping on this night is very important.

Mahashivratri is very significant for people who are on the spiritual path, and also for people with ambitions in the world



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](http://www.ishafoundation.org)

and in family situations. For people living in family situations, Mahashivratri is worshiped as Shiva's wedding anniversary. The ambitious see it as the day Shiva conquered all his enemies. But in the yogic tradition, we do not consider Shiva as a god, but as the first guru or Adi Guru – the one who started the yogic process. The word "Shiva" means "that which is not." If you can keep yourself in such a state that you are not yourself, and allow Shiva to be, then the possibility of opening up a new vision into life and looking at life with total clarity is possible.

What we refer to as Shiva is nothing but the very embodiment of ultimate perception. It is in this context that Isha Yoga Center celebrates Mahashivratri. In many ways, in the Yoga Center, the whole year is a way of looking forward to the Mahashivratri day. It is an opportunity and a possibility for all to raise their perception by at least one notch. It is an opportunity to not be embroiled in thoughts, emotions, or conclusions that you have drawn about life. This is what Shiva is about and this is what yoga is about.

May this Mahashivratri night not just be a night of wakefulness, but let this also become a night of intense aliveness and awareness for you. It is our wish and blessing that you make use of this wonderful gift that nature offers us on this day. I hope all of you ride this upsurge and know the beauty and ecstasy of what it means when we say "Shiva."

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# Kalabhavan Mani passes away

Noted Tamil and Malayalam actor Kalabhavan Mani passed away on Sunday March 6, 2016.

The Hindu newspaper reporting the sad news states- Born in Chalakkudy near Thrissur, Mr. Mani began his artistic career as a mimicry artiste before leaping in to the Malayalam film industry as a comedian in various films. He later took up character and villain roles in Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu movies and earned appreciation for his acting style.

The actor was also a popular singer of folk songs and had brought out several albums. He had won special jury award for his performance in the Malayalam movie Vasanthiyum Leshmiyum Pinne Njanum at the 47th National Film awards in the year 2000. This Malayalam movie was remade in Tamil as Kasi in which Vikram acted the role played by Kalabhavan Mani.

Kalabhavan Mani has acted in many Tamil movies like Gemini, Pudhiya Geethai, Aaru, Vel, Banda Paramasivam, Something Something Unakkum Enakkum and also Papanasam.

He is the most successful actor in Malayalam cinema. He has acted in films like MLA Mani: Patham Clasum Gusthiyum, Bachelor Party, Konthayum Poonoolum, Manushyamrugam, Aazhakadal and Priyap-

petta Nattukare.

His recent Tamil film was Kamal Haasan's "Papanasam" in which he portrays the role of the villain constable Gopal who suspects Suyambulingam played by Kamal Haasan, for the murder.



Mani Raman, commonly referred to by his stage name Kalabhavan Mani – (January 1, 1971 - March 6, 2016)

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# WINNING ESSAYS

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KIRISHAN CHANDRAN

GRADE 10

## Stress Young People Face Today

They say to enjoy life when you are young, and now I understand why. As soon as you enter high school or turn into a teen, it is like you have progressed to another level in a video game. You are impacted with a lot of stress, mainly because you are becoming an adult and have to decide on your future career. This stress can impact the young mentally and physically. The stress can get to their head and results in poor choices, such as committing suicide. It can also impact them physically by damaging their body as a substitute pain for stress. The young must deal with this mainly because of school, family and being aware of current society. It just shows there's no easy way in life without avoiding stress.

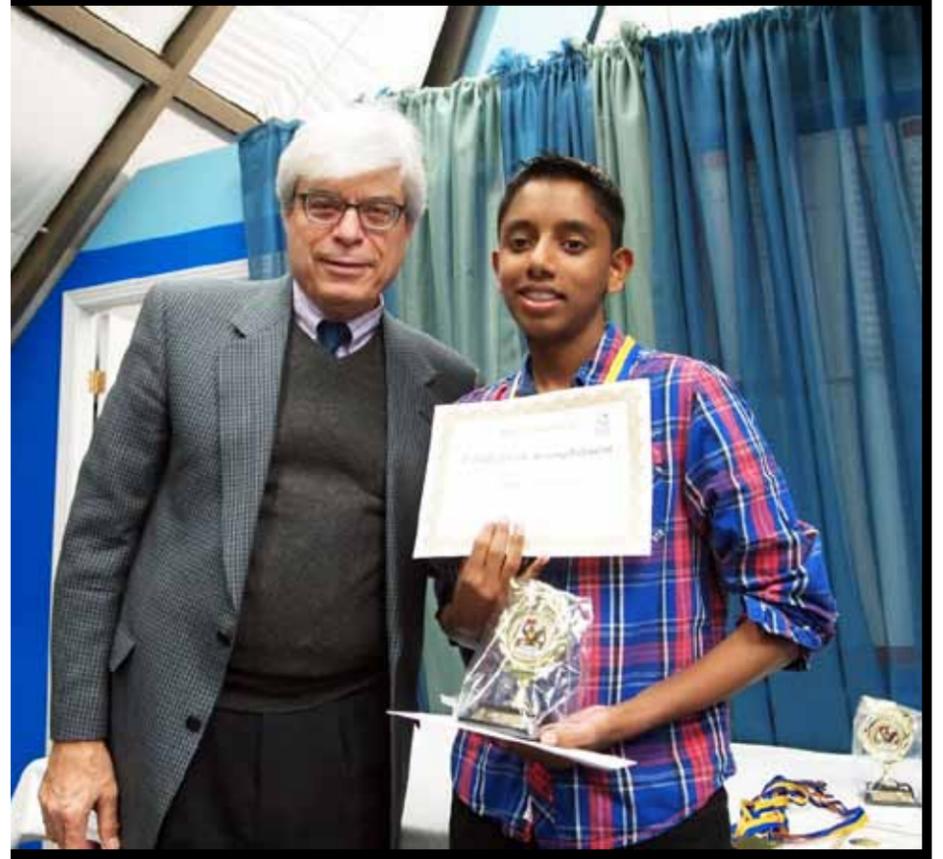
In order for you to have a successful future career, you have to go to school. School is a place where you gain knowledge for a possible requirement for a future job. When you are in grade eight or lower, school would not seem important and it really is not. School becomes more important once you enter high school. If you want a successful future career, it would mean for you to have a job. Most successful jobs are given to people who have gone to university and earned their degree. When you are in high school, you are auditioning for university. Most universities only accept students who are academically successful in high school. If you want to get into university, you have to get good marks in high school. That is not easy. High school teachers provide you with a lot of homework, assignments, projects and exams. Exams are what hurt people the most since they are worth over a fifth of your final grade. You have to plan your time wisely if you want to keep up with all your courses because forgetting to do the previous night's homework can mess up everything for you. It is not easy having this kind of work load from four subjects each day or eight subjects in a two-day span. Most of the time, students will not get the required eight hours of sleep for their body since they have projects due the next day and a test on the following day. This leaves students with a lot of stress knowing this is a long-term effect. If you under perform in high school, you under perform in life. This is the type of stress young people get from school.

In addition, the young are exposed to stress due to their own family. School takes up six hours of the day most of the time, meaning you have eighteen hours to spend with your family. Sometimes, it is not the most wanted thing for a student to be spending his/her afternoon. Family is family, but sometimes that can get on your nerves. Unfortunately, not all families are cooperative. There are times when families get into arguments. There may be a time where your parents are fighting with each other and next thing you know, they want a divorce. You are caught up in the middle of it and don't want to live with a wall separating you

from other family members. You are now unwillingly given a lot of choices which can decide the whole fate of your family, while others can get you in deep waters. You could be having conflicts with your family members, which can affect you negatively knowing there is a gap in your relationship. Sometimes, you may be forced to support your family at a young age. Your family may have financial problems, meaning you have to get a part-time job. Working from five to midnight, then having to do homework, brings a lot of stress – all because of your family's financial state. Families can provide their children with a lot of stress that they themselves are unaware of.

Lastly, the young deal with stress from being aware of current society. Being a young person in your teens, you want to be known positively. That may require you to be up-to-date with clothing trends or upcoming events. As humans of our generation, everyone wants to be noticed and get attention. We do not want to be put into a group and be labelled as a "nobody". We want to get noticed by people in order to fit in. For example, your friends may be into sports and talk about the games being played. "Superbowl" is a popular championship game for football. Almost half the people who watch that game know nothing about football, but they watch it because almost everybody will be talking about it the next day. To fit in like that gives youths a lot of stress. You need to be aware of everything in society. You might have to spend extra money on popular clothing brands or plan out your day to make time to relax and watch a TV show. In reality, this is all unnecessary stress. Youths are implanting this stress on themselves so there is no reason to complain. However, do you really want to be a "nobody"? If you aren't aware of the things happening in current society, you will have no friends and that is just reality. Our society has developed into this kind of nature that this has become a requirement in life, leaving the youths with unwanted stress.

In conclusion, the journey to adulthood is never easy. You have to overcome a mountain of stress if you want a successful future. This requires patience since everything you do as a teen has long-term effects. This stress is what youths have to overcome in that span. If more adults become aware of the stress youths are dealing with, they could help lessen the load. Unfortunately, stress is unavoidable if you want a successful future. The best thing you could do to overcome this stress is by talking it out with a person close to you. You will be laughing back at this once you realize you have a successful future.



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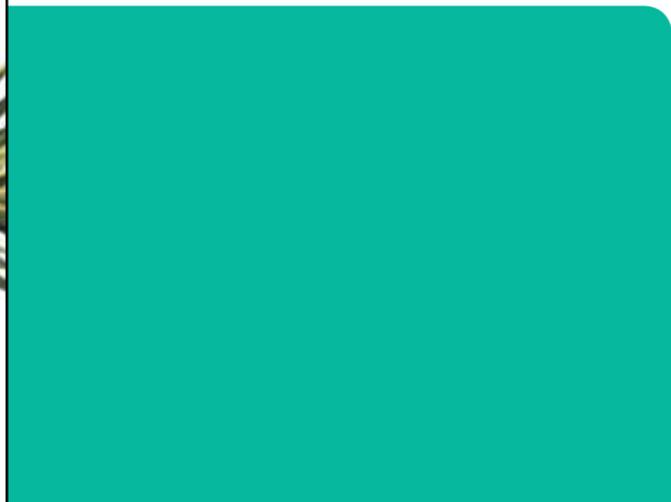
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# THE SOLITARY REAPER

## (The timed sequences)



### *C. Kamalaharan*

A strenuous climb in quick time  
 Took him to the top on time  
 To tap the juice in no time  
 And come down just in time  
 To serve customers one at a time  
 Without wasting any more time.  
 He never had extra time  
 Neither had he leisure time  
 To be with family and spend the time  
 Cos he was busy all the time.

He went through a hell of a time  
 When customers withdrew from time to time  
 Lured by other brews available any time  
 And so he decided to move with the time  
 And changed his vocation at the ripe time  
 By selling palmyra jaggery at a fixed time  
 A vocation that stood the test of time.  
 The man who laboured through bad time  
 Is now happy having lot of time  
 To be with family most of the time.



By: Raymond Rajabalan

**Good Friday, also called Holy Friday, is the Friday preceding Easter Sunday It commemorates the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ and his death at Calvary.**

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the Child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college.

He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. He had nothing to do with this world except the power of His Divine manhood. While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a Cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth while He was dying—and that was His coat. When He was dead He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Such was His human life—Yet, He rose from the dead.

Twenty wide centuries have come and gone since the occurrence of a historical event on the Palestinian region of Middle East and today He is the Centerpiece of the human race and the Leader of the column of progress. Of all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that One Solitary Life.

The crucifixion of Jesus created a vast impact in the history of mankind and resulted in a variety of social changes. The birth of the only son of God almighty brought in a ray of hope to the humanity stained by sins.

What was considered as an ordinary event at that time later turned out to be of great historical significance. The fact that the time of birth of Jesus was the basis for world history to be divided into Before Christ (B.C) and after Christ (A.D) emphasizes the tremendous significance of this epoch.

Jesus, the only begotten son of God who had the power of being able to be born in a palace with all the comforts and glory, chose to be born in a manger, depicting the greatness of humility. After 33 years of his life in this world when he sacrificed by himself on the cross on Mount Calvary on a Fri-

*As the centuries pass, the evidence is accumulating that, measured by His effect on history, Jesus is the most influential life ever lived on this planet.*

— Historian Kenneth Scott Latourette

day, he once again humbled himself.

His selfless sacrifice, offering his life to redeem the sinful mankind was the starting point of salvation for the humanity.

If there was one whose birth as well as death and his life between the two ends of human life cycle was of great historical significance, it was only the life of Jesus Christ and no one else.

There are 52 Fridays in each calendar year. Yet, why only Good Friday has gained significance world wide?

- It was the day when the Almighty Jesus, hung on the cross and

teachings enticed Judas Iscariot one of the disciples of Jesus, paying him 30 pieces of silver to help Jesus arrested

Judas betrayed Jesus 2000 years ago but it is painful to note that incidences of betrayal continue to this very day. From time to time a few great men dare to be the guiding light for the oppressed people but their noble intentions continue to be blocked by traitors who want to safeguard their interests at any cost. There have been numerous such instances throughout the history but as always at the end the truth will prevail.

# Good Friday

gave his life for the salvation of the mankind

- It was on that day, the sinless son of God, volunteered to carry the weight of our sins, bled profusely underwent untold agony and breathed his last on the cross.

- Good Friday was the day on which God showed to the world the depth of His Love for the mankind.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a star was the guiding factor to the three wise men and helped them reach the place where infant Jesus was lying in the manger. Similarly cross, the identifying symbol of every Christian has become a permanent fixture in the history mankind as a symbol of salvation and redemption. It must be remembered that the death of Jesus, his supreme sacrifice for the entire world was not just for Christians alone but each and every one.

How the Cross did become a symbol of Redemption?

With the crucifixion of Christ, the cross which was considered to be a symbol of disgrace and humiliation has come to be accepted as a symbol of redemption.

In those days, only the worst criminals were crucified under the Roman rule. Those who were offended by the teachings of Christ, those Jewish leaders whose hypocrisy was exposed constantly schemed to lay false charges on Him and some how or other get him crucified. When their self interests were affected those opposed to the

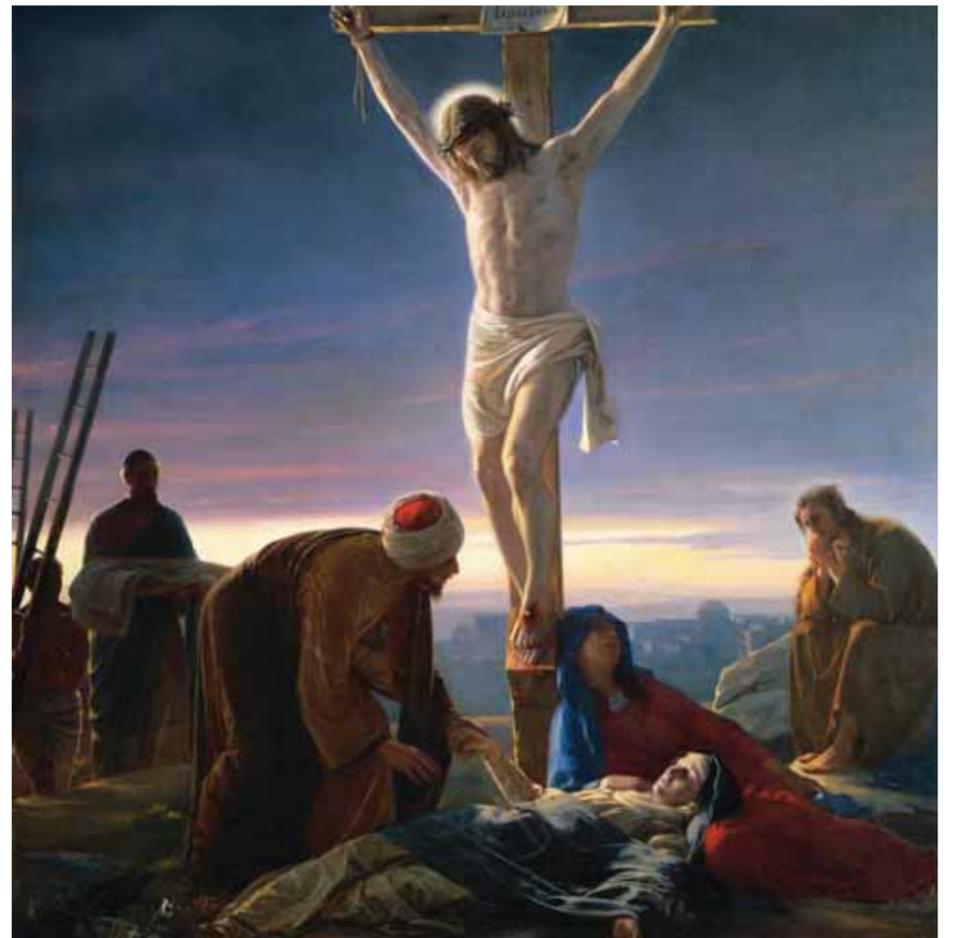
life, Jesus, the King of Kings He had victory over death. Jesus rose to life, to the disappointing of the jubilant high priests, to the joy of the sorrowing poor, to the delight of the frightened disciples.

He rose to life, to be with us. He rose to us counsel us, lead us out of difficult situations, fulfill our needs and to wipe our tears. Of course one may have to undergo unbearable pain and great sacrifice before we can see a light at the end of the tunnel. The death of Jesus very clearly proves this to us.

Many of our Saviour's most profound teachings are counterintuitive. "Love your enemies" is an example. The solutions that our minds are prone to develop are often different from those the Lord would have us pursue. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Isaiah55:8).

When we encounter roadblocks in our efforts it is usual to lose hope but if we accept the fact that the thought and plans of God are different from ours, it will give us strength to bear the present agonies with the hope of a bright future

The struggle for Justice and free-



The enemies of Jesus Christ scored a temporary victory by crucifying Him to death. However, what they considered to be their victory finally proved to be a huge victory for Jesus over death. The death of Christ on a Friday turned out to be day of victory over sins and that is why, we can consider it to be a Good Friday since it has brought so much good to the mankind.

On the third day when Jesus rose to

dom from oppression cannot be stopped by crosses, torture and horrific killings. This has been proved over and over again throughout the history. All the sacrifices of any suffering people in every part of this world have always ended as a great uprising resulting in great freedom. This is the lesson that the death of Jesus teaches us.



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# SCARBOROUGH ROSEWOOD FOOD DRIVE INC.

The Emergence of an Anti-poverty Conviction from an initiative to an institution

*“The war against hunger is truly mankind’s war of liberation.” John F. Kennedy*

By: Raymond Rajabalan

## How this humanitarian project evolved



It all began on a Halloween night during trick or treat by a group of kids. One of the kids among the group had a unique novel idea. When she knocked at the door of a residence in Scarborough, as usual she was offered some candy but the young woman told the owner that she was there to collect items for a local food bank.

The conversation then continued on a very positive note. “Oh, okay, that’s a shift in thinking. You are collecting food items for the food bank. I like that idea. Wait a minute I’ll see what I have....” answered the resident owner who then gave her some jars of peanut butter and some cans of tuna.

The grateful youth responded “Thanks sir.” “You are welcome, and thanks for bringing a new twist to an old tradition...Thanks”

Though the conversation ended up within a few minutes it eventually led to a great humanitarian project in Scarborough.

At the time of these exchanges, Rosewood Taxpayers Association (RTA) in Scarborough was seeking a practical and direct pathway that would allow the neighbourhood association to interface with the broader needs of some Scarborough residents. The Association was seeking an obviously beneficial link between the mostly and relatively fortunate residents of Rosewood and the less fortunate residents of Scarborough.

On the night of Monday, October 31, 2011, the young woman who requested food for the food bank rather than candy for her and her friends provided that pathway. By her actions that night, she is responsible for the conceptual birth of Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc.’s predecessor,

Rosewood Fall Food Drive (The Drive). She planted the seed, and in October of 2012 the first RTA-sponsored month-long door-to-door food drive in the community of Rosewood was launched.

Under the name Rosewood’s Fall Food Drive, student and adult volunteers dedicated their time and knowledge to a new RTA initiative. By the end of The Drive on October 28th, and after knocking on approximately 1600 doors in the community of Rosewood exclusively, The Drive was able to deliver 2250 food items to Dorset Park Community Hub (Agincourt Community Services Association) on Kennedy Road in Scarborough. One year hence, in October of 2013, The Drive expanded beyond the geographical confines of Rosewood and consequently adopted the new name, Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive. In that year, and equipped with a larger team of approximately 23 volunteers, The Drive collected 2977 food items. Again, all of the items were donated to the Dorset Park Community Hub.

Between October 2013 and early fall of 2014, several newspaper articles (e.g. Vital Signs, Toronto Star, The Scarborough Mirror) highlighted a significant and growing income gap between Toronto’s inner suburbs (Scarborough and Etobicoke as examples) and the city’s core.

It had become increasingly clear that some inner suburban communities were less than bedroom communities occupied by middle-income residents with meticulously manicured lawns and gardens. More and more, these communities have become partially defined by poverty.

Confronted with this data, in October 2014, The Drive expanded further afield and began to take on the appearance of an ever-expanding phenomenon creeping across Ward 41. In that year, 45 volunteers including Councillor Chin Lee and former MP for Scarborough-Rouge River Rathika Sitsabaiesan, worked to collect 3553 items of food that were again sent to Dorset Park Community Hub. However, in spite of the obvious success of the volunteers’ efforts, it was evident that more families were becoming vulnerable even as the city was becoming wealthier; more was required.



Rathika Sitsabaiesan during Rosewood Food Drive

By the end of the 2014 Drive, it was apparent that the number of families requiring assistance was greater than previously anticipated. It also became clear that Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive had the administrative capacity and human resources to take on more. Consequently, equipped with a broader mission statement, expanded zones of operation within Ward 41 and coupled with the need for more formal access to existing institutions and greater legitimacy, Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive sought formal non-profit-all-volunteer-non-charitable status.

On February 23, 2015 Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive became Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc. and held its inaugural Board meeting on Friday, May 12, 2015.

The vision of Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc. is for all people to live in a world that’s free from poverty. The mission of Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc. is to help eliminate poverty and hunger through provision, education and action.

### Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc.

#### Founder’s Biography

Courtney (Fisher) arrived in Toronto from Jamaica via the United States in February of 1982. Shortly after arriving he registered as a student at Atkinson College at York University where he completed a degree in political science. Later he went on to complete a degree in education at the University of Windsor. Since graduating from Windsor, he was employed as a teacher with North York Board of Education and later the amalgamated Toronto District School Board.



Courtney has always been active in the community. His involvement with West Indies United Sports Club Inc. spans a period of thirty years. Throughout that time he functioned in the capacities of player (soccer), coach, executive secretary, and served two terms as the organization’s president. He has supported youth in the community through his involvement with The Tutor Group, The Center for Achievement and his own tutorial service. Courtney spent a brief time working with the Black Action Defence Committee (BAD-C) during the organization’s early years.

Between 2011 and 2015, Courtney served as President of Rosewood Taxpayers Association (RTA). During that period, he continued to celebrate the great work done by the Association’s long-standing executive by continuing the majority of the tried-and-true initiatives. Some of these initiatives include two general meetings per year (choked full of great conversations, motivated guest speakers and attended by representatives from Canada’s three levels of government), spring Community Clean-up Days, property standards advocacy, and community safety and cleanliness advocacy.

During his term with RTA, the Association approved the implementation of some new initiatives. Some of these include Leadership and Service Awards to deserving graduates from Alexmuir Jr. Public School and St Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic School, Lawn and Garden Awards to deserving residents of the Rosewood community, bilingual newsletters (English and Chinese), Chinese language general meetings and a Leadership Award for Rosewood Soccer. Working with dedicated volunteers in a community of approximately 1600 homes, Courtney worked to bring the Association’s membership from 850 members in 2010-2011 to over 1000 active members in 2014-2015.

In 2013, the Association fostered a partnership with the local church, Calvary Logos Baptist Church, and, working together, in addition to the longstanding spring community clean-up, they implemented a fall community clean-up and BBQ. While with Rosewood Taxpayers Association, Courtney also worked to implement an annual Lunar New Year celebration and partnered with enthusiastic volunteers to organize and execute the Rosewood Fall Food Drive from which evolved Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc.

In his capacities as founder and first president of Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc., Courtney explains his association with the organization as natural evolution and the result of a life-long concern. In this regard, he

references a tear-jerking boyhood experience in which he drove past a rodent-infested city dump and tearfully witnessed young children with bare feet and minimal clothing compete with malnourished adults, underweight pigs and bone-thin dogs for scraps of discarded food. He describes the experience as emotionally overwhelming and profoundly definitive—one he has never forgotten and one that confirmed for him that all is not well with the world and that people who are moved by these conditions carry a responsibility to do something about them—“It’s been almost four decades since that experience, and today, even to this day, whenever I share that story, I attempt to compose myself before speaking; it’s hard. It’s hard because, even as I speak, a new generation of rodents, children, adults, pigs and dogs scavenge the same dump.”

In addition to his role with Scarborough Rosewood Food Drive Inc., Courtney is currently an active Board member of Wolmer’s Alumni (Toronto chapter)—his high school Alma Mater. In this role, he assists with fundraising efforts to help build and maintain the physical infrastructure of the school and to advance students’ learning.

Finally, Courtney’s cultural fascinations include enjoying the melodic sounds and prophetic lyrics of reggae. He also enjoys operas and, with his wife Sandra and son, Sean, frequently attends musicals and other theatrical performances at the various theatres in and around Toronto. His favourite reggae groups/performers are Culture, Bob Marley and the Wailers and Burning Spear. He loves both Beijing and western operas, and holds a particular fondness for Dan characters (female characters) in the Beijing opera. His favourite western opera is Love from Afar. Courtney’s favourite musicals are Jesus Christ Superstar and Oliver.

### Role of Sri Lankan Tamil Business Establishments

Very recently a little known fact about the generosity of some grocery store owners in Scarborough has emerged. The owners of at least four Scarborough Tamil business establishments have



ERRA Supermarket Staff with Courtney

got themselves actively involved in this great humanitarian project that aims to fight poverty and hunger in the local community. The owners of NEW SPICELAND Supermarket, E R R A Supermarket, S U N C I T Y Supermarket and N E W O C E A N Supermarket



NEW Ocean Supermarket Staff with a member of this project

deserve to be congratulated for their generous contribution. They have shunned publicity and have been continuing their generosity without any fanfare. There is every indication that once more



NEWSPICELAND Supermarket Staff with Courtney

people become aware of this worthy project this list of donors is bound to grow in time to come.



A Member of SUNCITY staff with Courtney

This noble project deserves all the support from the local community. Anyone who would like to know more of this noble project can contact the founder Courtney and learn how they can participate in this great humanitarian project.

For details, please contact the founder of the project at the following e-mail address or phone number: scarboroughrosewoodfd@hotmail.com or 647-385-1256

# PHOTODYNAMIC THERAPY FOR COLORECTAL CANCER

March is dedicated as a National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

By: Uthayan Thurairajah

The colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in Canada. It is critical to sharing information about the importance of recognizing the signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer. This is a great time for everyone including patients, survivors, and caregivers to tell their stories and to talk about this disease that is preventable, treatable and beatable.

Colorectal cancer screening saves lives. Among cancers that affect men and women, the colorectal cancer is the second foremost cause of cancer deaths in North America. About 140 thousand Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and more than 50,000 people die every year. This Cancer is greatly avoidable by getting screened at an early stage.

## What we Can Do

If you are over 50 years old, you better get screened for colorectal cancer regularly. You can talk to your doctor about getting screened. Screening tests will help to find precancerous polyps so they can be removed. The treatment can also be most effective if you find this cancer early.

## Facts about Colorectal Cancer

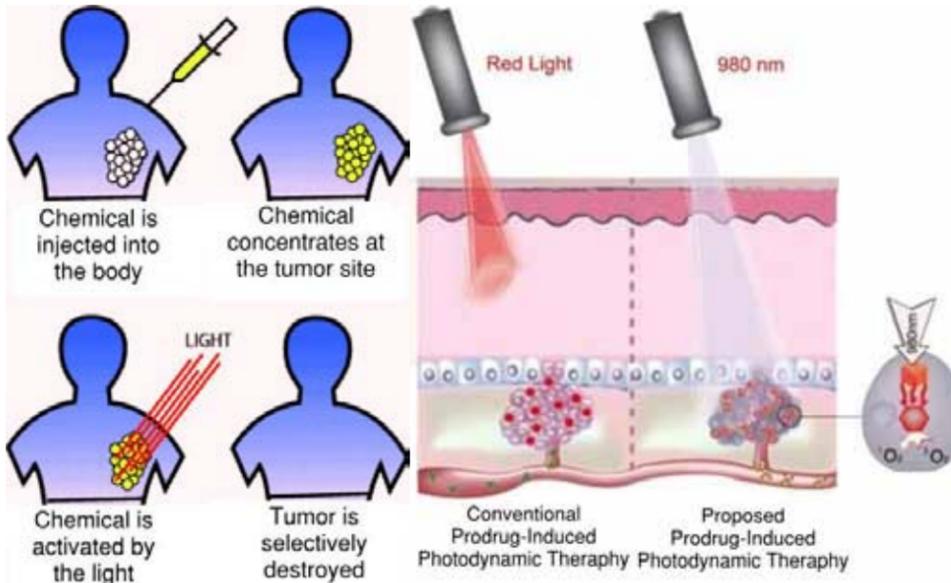
Most of the colorectal cancers occur in people aged 50 and older. We could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know it. Precancerous polyps do not always cause at first. That is why having a screening test is so important. If we have symptoms, they may include blood in or on the stool. We may not know why we lose weight, stomach pain, aches, or cramps that do not go away. Something other than cancer may also cause these symptoms. We have to see our doctor if we have any of them. If we think we may be at high risk, talk to the doctor about when and how often to get tested and what test is right for us.



- Colonoscopy
- Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)
- Stool Test, or Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)
- Sigmoidoscopy

The colonoscopy can be done every 10 years, and fecal occult blood test (FOBT) which is high sensitivity, stool test, or fecal immunochemical test (FIT) can be done every year, and Sigmoidoscopy can be done every 5 years, with FOBT every three years.

Colorectal Cancer Awareness National Colorectal Cancer Action Campaign offers resources for patients and health professionals to make them aware of colorectal cancer. This includes print materials such as fact sheets, brochures, and poster, and television and radio public service announcements.

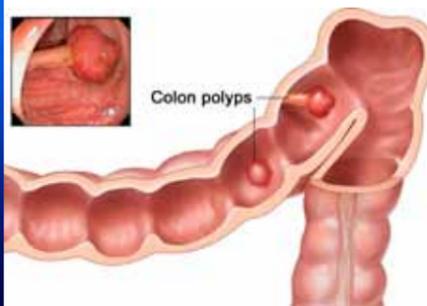


## Photodynamic therapy

Photodynamic therapy (PDT) of colorectal cancer is a relatively new alternative for mitigating of colorectal cancer. A new type of nanoparticle with US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved PDT to kill effectively deep-set cancer cells with negligible damage to adjacent tissue/muscle. This promising new healing strategy could magnify the use of PDT to enter into the deep tumor cells.

“We are thrilled for clinical practice using our enhanced red-emission nanoparticles combined with FDA-approved PDT to kill deeper tumors,” said Dr. Han, lead author of the study and assistant professor of biochemistry & molecular pharmacology. They have been able to do this with biocompatible low-power, deep-tissue-penetrating 980-nm near-infrared light.

In PDT, a safe light-sensitive drug is given to the patient is absorbed



by all the body cells including the tumor cells. The Red laser lights are selectively pointed in the tumor area changed to the drug particles. The red light intermingles with the photosensitive drug and produces an extremely reactive form of oxygen (singlet oxygen) that kills the cancer cells while leaving most neighboring cells unharmed. The red light has limited ability to penetrate into the deeper tissue. Therefore, use of PDT can reach deeper set cancer cells.

The upconverting nanoparticles (UCNPs) are used along with the PD drug. In their investigations, the investigators used the FDA-approved photosensitizer drug aminolevulinic acid and combined it with the augmented red-emission UCNPs they had developed. The near-infrared light exposed to the cancer location. Dr. Han and associates showed that the UCNPs effectively altered the near-infrared light into red light and activated the PD drug at levels deeper than currently achieved with photodynamic therapy methods.

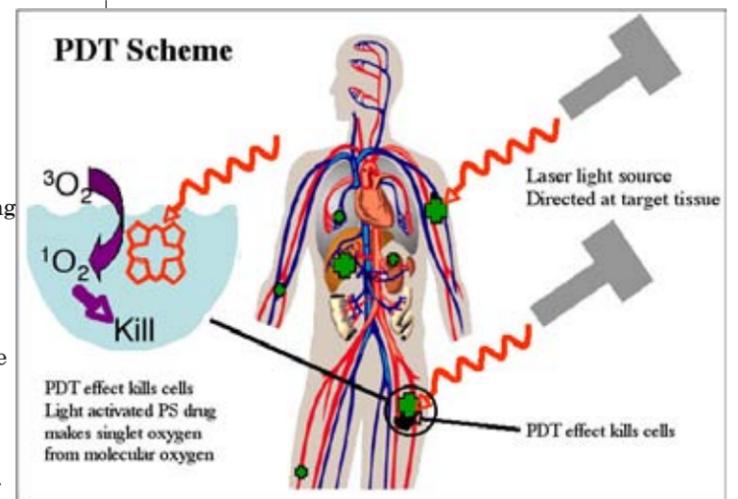
PDT Performed in mice and human subjects. The blended therapy showed an improved destruction of the cancerous tumor using lower laser power.

Pests treatment - Mice were injected either medically or intrarectally with CT26 colon tumor cells. 2.5 mg/kg of IP AIPcS 4 was injected when tumors were visible. After 24 hours, mice were subjected to photo radiation. Huge tumor necrosis in response to PDT was observed. PDT also prolonged survival of treated mice.

Patient treatment - A 70-year-old woman subject with recurrent local rectal carcinoma received 2mg/kg of Photofrin II. After 2 days and 4 days, she was

subjected to direct photo radiation. After the first session, there was the complete withdrawal of the tumor cells. After the treatment biopsies upto 10 weeks showed no cancer cells in the treated area. It was effective in both in human and pests studies.

“This therapy has great assurance as a non-invasive killer for tumors that are beyond 1 cm skin depth without the side-effects of chemotherapy,” said Dr. Yong Zhang, professor of the National University of Singapore, and a leader in the development and



application of upconversion nanoparticles (UCNPs). This approach is an electrifying new improvement for colorectal cancer, breast cancer, and lung cancer cure which is nontoxic and efficient. It opens the new opportunities for using the augmented red-emission nanoparticles in other photonic and biophotonic applications.



**Uthayan Thurairajah** is a Senior Engineer and Associate at WSP|MMM Group with over twenty years of experience in Electrical Engineering and Lighting field, and he also holds a Lecturer position in the Department of Communication and Design at Ryerson University. Uthayan is a member of several Canadian and international professional association including Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO), Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine (AIHM) and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research (APTR). He has worked on multi-disciplinary lighting and electrical projects for the Ministry of Transportation, various Towns, Municipalities, Regions and others. He carries out research on the subject of lighting and taken part in several projects. 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.



# VALLUVAR'S VIEWS: THE IMPORTANCE OF RIGHTEOUS LIVING



*By: JJ Aputharajah*

True happiness is the outcome of ; all else is inglorious and brings about misery. Righteous conduct is also indispensable for happy family life. Goethe, the German philosopher asserts that only the heart without a stain knows perfect ease. Valluvar further adds that good conduct enables a man to end the cycle of deaths and confers contentment through wealth and fame. The Book of Proverbs in the Bible pronounces: 'He that followeth after righteousness and mercy, findeth life, righteousness and honour'. A man's attachment to virtue raises him to greater heights; his failure degrades him. Ramayanam illustrates this morale in a very convincing manner when Ravana loses all his Godly rewards and blessings due to a serious blemish in

his conduct when he tried to covet the wife of Lord Rama. One must do all good he can, at all times and places and in all ways possible. One must make his profession or vocation a live opportunity for service to his immediate community and to promote international goodwill and understanding. Valluvar's ideas encompass all avenues of service for all times. A clean mind is the basis of all righteous living; everything else is mere vanity. Bible puts the idea forthrightly when it expounds: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'. Thoughts and deeds free of envy, greed, wrath and bitter words alone constitute righteous living.

Valluvar emphasizes the need for righteous deeds when he says, 'Anrarivam ennethu aram seyka,

mattrathu ponrumkal ponraththunnai'. Righteous deeds should not be postponed as these alone will come to your aid, until you die and even afterwards. We should not judge the inequalities of life as a result of good deeds and its reverse; by comparing the man in the palanquin with its bearers.

Performance of righteous deeds will ensure us the release from the chain of births. According to Valluvar, 'righteous deeds lead to salvation'. Valluvar concludes his treatise on righteous living by stating that 'One must do only virtuous deeds and eschew all kinds of vice'.

"Arattan Varuvathe Inpam Mattellam,  
Puratta pukkalum illa"

*(Kural: 31-40).*



"Vaiyathul valvaangu Vaalpavan,  
Vaanuraiyum theivathul Vaikkpadum'.



## MANAGING YOUR MONEY

# Cheaper oil, weaker dollar – threat or opportunity

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

Increased production and drilling coupled with new efficiency measures, stockpiles of unused oil and weakening global demand have driven the cost of oil down significantly. The weakness in oil prices has also weakened the Canadian dollar because, as a significant supplier, our dollar is closely connected to the price of oil.

With oil down and the Loonie down plus other current economic ups and downs you may be concerned about your portfolio and its performance. The question is: Are cheaper oil and a weaker dollar a threat to your portfolio or an opportunity? And the answer is: It depends on your reaction to them.

If you react by jumping in and out of the market, trying to dump losers and find winners; if you react by selling out at big losses and sitting on the cash; if you react by chasing other forms of 'investment' like coins and gold that are generally not considered to be sources of a stable retirement income; if you react in any of these ways, that's the threat to your portfolio. It's called emotional investing and that 'strategy' doesn't pay, it costs. The market does what it does – sometimes it's up, sometimes it's down and often it's volatile.

That's one face of creating investment opportunity. Two others are effective asset allocation through a carefully selected and properly diversified mix of assets and dollar cost averaging, the strategy of buying a stock or fund on a regular basis, regardless of the stock or fund price – the price of your stock or fund averages out over time and you are always participating in the market so you will never miss out on periods of strong returns.

Strategic asset allocation is a long term process used to identify the percentages of an investment portfolio that will be invested in a variety of investment securities. These percentages will vary between portfolios that have different goals and objectives.

For example, a portfolio being managed to create an education fund fifteen years from now would normally have a much larger equity allocation than one

designed to produce retirement income right now. While these two objectives may differ, the goal of strategic asset allocation remains the same. Namely, to develop a portfolio that potentially offers the highest return for a given level of risk, or conversely a portfolio that is expected to produce the lowest

risk for a given level of return. Getting to the right asset mix can be complex. Quite often, computer models are utilized to produce a mathematical framework that effectively analyzes the investment returns and risk characteristics of a large number of asset classes such as U.S., International or Canadian equities, along with bonds and real estate. Depending on the number of asset classes included in the analysis, the computer model may literally analyze thousands of different asset combinations. In view of most investors' busy schedules, they have neither the time, patience or skill to undertake such an analysis which is why they normally turn to an investment professional. Depending on your objectives and preferences, a portfolio may contain anywhere from six to ten distinct asset classes ranging from fixed income securities to domestic to international equities and further diversified by growth and value management styles.

David Joseph, M.A., CFP, CLU. Financial Consultant

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The end result is an investment strategy that is tailored to your comfort level with risk. Risk-averse investors typically invest in a portfolio that emphasizes fixed-income securities. The goal is usually related to capital preservation and income generation

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.

There are many other proven 'opportunities' for growing your wealth and funding a comfortable retirement – and they should all be wrapped into a comprehensive financial plan tailored precisely to your unique needs. Talk to your professional advisor about best financial strategies for you.

**Disclaimer:**

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



Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce

25 Years of  
Business Success

Hilton Suites Markham and  
Metro Toronto Convention Centre  
September 9th- 10th 2016





## 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. 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](http://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](http://www.myreluctanttravels.wordpress.com)

# CURRY LEAF Kuzhambu



Kuzhambu basically means gravy and the description of the consistency of the dish is in the word itself. We are extremely proud of our heritage and it's fun watching the western world of culinary masters unravel hidden gems that we've used for centuries. Curry leaves are one of them! Curry leaves are acclaimed for all sorts of medicinal values, growing strong, long, black hair is the one we're most typically keen on. So try this recipe and watch the locks grow...

### Method:

Wash and dry the curry leaves, Fry them in 2 Tbs of oil and once cooled grind to a fine paste. Next heat the ghee and shallow fry the shallots and garlic (These don't have to be cut- just peel, wash and fry whole for added texture), once browned, remove and set aside. Then in a clean pan heat the remaining oil, add the fennel seeds, dry chilli and diced onion and cook for 3-5 minutes, once the onions start to brown add the ginger paste and tomatoes and cook till the tomatoes are mushy and soft. Next add the ghee roasted shallots and whole garlic, ground curry leaves, turmeric, coriander, chilli powder and the tamarind water.

Finally add salt to taste and once it starts boiling- it's ready!

Enjoy this secret gem of the Indian Subcontinent!

If you're on Instagram, don't forget to take pictures and #monsoonjournal.

Enjoy.....!



### Ingredients:

- 20 Stalks of Curry Leaves (Karuvepilai)
- 10 small shallots (Sinnavengaayam)
- 10 cloves of garlic (Poondu)
- 1 medium Onion- diced (Vengaayam)
- 1 medium Tomato- diced (Thakkaali)
- 2 Tsp Fennel (Perunseeragam/ Soambu)
- 2 Tsp Chilli Powder (Milagaithool)
- 3 Tsp Coriander Powder (Kotthamallithool)
- 2 Tsp Ginger Paste (Injivithai)
- 2 Dried Chillies (kaaynthamilagai)
- ½ Cup Tamarind water (made from a small lime size ball of tamarind)
- 4 Tbs Sesame Oil (Nalennai)
- 2 Tsp Ghee
- 1 Tsp paste or ½ golf ball size Tamarind water (Puli thanni)
- Salt (Uppu) to taste
- ½ Tsp Turmeric (Manjal)



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# VeeDu Living to host first Home and Garden Show in the GTA targeting the South Asian community, expected to attract thousands, featuring popular HGTV Host Paul Lafrance



Organizers of the upcoming VeeDu Living Home & Garden Show presented by OHM Developments are excited about the upcoming show catered towards the growing & thriving South Asian community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

The two-day Home & Garden show will be attracting international and local brands to thousands of attendees at the Markham Fairgrounds on April 9th and 10th. Special guest Paul Lafrance, host of HGTV's "Decked Out" and "Disaster Decks" along with others will be presenting and providing their expertise first-hand, through presentations, panel discussions and Do It Yourself sessions.

This is a novel event in the South Asian community – never before have we had a show of this type focused on the GTA's growing South Asian community focused on the home and living space. This show seeks to address the unique needs of the growing community we are aiming to serve and provide the tools and resources to enhance the lives of South Asian homeowners.

The show will provide a platform for the South Asian community to connect with diverse businesses who can provide quality, service, and convenience to suit the customers' needs.

The VeeDu Living Home & Garden show will consist of exhibitors who focus on: Interior Design, Outdoor Living, Home Renovation, Food & Entertainment, and financial planning. The show's objective is to ensure that attendees are able to learn something new, get inspired, and meet professionals in the home industry.

Admission and parking at the VeeDu Living Home & Garden Show will be free of charge, along with exclusive discounts for show attendees, and hourly prize giveaways. Log on to Veeduliving.com or check Facebook for more details. Bring the family to learn, get inspired, and meet professionals who can help turn your house into the home you've always wanted. While you're at the show, enjoy the great food served by amazing chefs.



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Broker/Manager  
416-568-1078

# Tamils' Information Celebrates 'SILVER JUBILEE' 2016

**By Quintus Thuraisingam**

The Tamils' Information magazine celebrated its Silver Jubilee event coupled with an Award Ceremony on February 07, 2016.

Professor Rev. Dr. S. J. Chandrakanthan chaired the Tamil Session and the School Trustee Mr. Neethan Shan chaired the English Session. Hon. Glen Murray, Ontario Minister of Environment and Climate Change was the Chief Guest and Ms. Pam McConnell, the Deputy Mayor of Toronto, and Mr. Logan Kanapathi, the City Councillor of Markham were the Special Guests for the event.

Tamils' Information is a monthly publication that has been fulfilling the growing need for information and guidance among the new immigrants within the Tamil Community for the past 25 years. It also recognizes and promotes the contributions and achievements of many outstanding individuals and groups not only among the Tamils but also in the larger mainstream Canadian society.

Rev. Dr.A.J. Chandrakanthan congratulated Mr & Mrs. Thiru Thiruchelvam for the outstanding contribution to the Tamil Community for the past 25 years through the Tamils' Informa-

tion magazine. The Editor-in-Chief Mr. Thiru S.Thiruchelvam thanked the community for their continued support and encouragement over the years. He emphasized that the Tamils' Information is a completely community funded publication and does not receive any form of financial assistance from any government agencies. He also thanked the writers, contributors and volunteers.

Ms. Pam McConnell, the Deputy Mayor of Toronto, delivered her greetings and recollected her close journey with the Tamils' Information since its inception.

Hon. Glen Murray, Ontario Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Chief Guest stressed the fact the Tamil Community has been strongly contributing to the betterment of Canada. He recognized the achievement of Tamil Youth in education and extra-curricular activities

**Award Recipients**

Professor Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran from UK received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Tamils' Information.

Mr. Sasiharan Pathmanathan - Contribution Tamil fontography to electronic & print media.

Mr. Varna Rameswaran - Art & Culture.

Mr. P. Sriskanthan- Art, culture, media and social affairs.

Mrs. Rajanie Sakthyruban- Dance & Culture

Mr. Raj Nadarajah and Mr. Subramaniam Vivekananthan - Entrepreneurship

Mr. Shelly Antony - Drama & Cinematography

The Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient Professor Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran stayed away from talking about medicine or health but spoke of the reality of lifespan as to why people tend to fail in life. He emphasized that the three most crucial requirements in life would be money, health and happiness.



# KC Dental clinic Grand Opening in Ajax

**By Siva Sivapragasam**

KC Dental had their grand opening in Ajax recently with many well-wishers, dignitaries and the Media in attendance.

The clinic is located in a busy intersection of Salem and Rossland roads with ample parking space available. The clinic provides a wide range of dental services for the whole family with the most latest dental technology.

The clinic is owned and operated by Dr. Kan Chandra, a well experienced Dentist with several years of dental experience. Among the services provided are Basic filling & cleaning, crowns, Bridges & veneers, Root canal Therapy, Teeth whitening, Dentures, Implant crowns, emergency treatment etc.

The clinic is operated six days a week and uses water saving equipment, digital charting and radiography. Dr. Chandra is ably assisted by his associates Dr. Sharon Barr and Dr. Parneet Kaur together with a team of qualified and experienced staff.

Patients visiting KC Dental can be assured that their dental needs are provided with the highest quality of dental care. (seen here are some pictures taken at the grand opening of the clinic).





# OBITUARIES

March 2016

## RASANAYAGAM - MAILVAHANAM

(former Secretary to the Governor, Western Province, Sri Lanka) passed away peacefully on 26th of February 2016; Beloved husband of Professor Yoga Rasanayagam (former Professor of Geography, University of Colombo, presently Chancellor of Eastern University of Sri Lanka), loving father of Arani and Erahana Rasanayagam, beloved father-in-law of Dr. Raguraj and Deepa, loving brother of late Kamaleswary, Saraswathy, late Ramanathan, Pathmanathan, late Anasuya and Savithiri, loving brother-in-law of AmbigaThamotharampillai, Gnana Kulendran, Jayalxmy Kandaiya and Arunthathy Sri Rangana- than and loving grandfather of Iniyal and Venthan.

## SUBRAMANIAM - S. BALA (BALA)

- Formerly Staff at John Kheels Pvt. Ltd. (Tea Department). Beloved husband of Kanthimathi, father of Sivakala, Sasikala Thilakawathie & Suman, father-in-law of Prabakaran (U.K.), Muruganathan (V.K. Enterprise), Manikandan (U.K.), grand- father of Ragul, Jai, Suwetha, Praveen & Lashiya, brother-in- law of Paster David V. Rasalingam.

## SUBRAMANIYAM SRIDARAN

passed away peacefully on Saturday 06 February 2016. Aged 56 years (Born 13.10.1960). Son of late Supra Maniyam Paramaswaran, husband of Chithradevi, father of Niroshan and Madury, brother of Jayadevi, Indradevi, late Naguleswaran, Radhidevi, Subhashini, Shanthidevi, Jayanthi, Prabakaran, son-in-law of Marudhalingam, Sharadevi, brother-in-law of Malarwanan, Jayaraman, Kavary, Kokila, Jayamohganain.

## SUNDARAMOORTHY RUDRAKUMARAN (BABU).

(Sundaramoorthy & Sons, Jaffna), (Old Student of St. John's College, Jaffna). Eldest son of Rajaratnam Sundaramoorthy (founder of Sundaramoorthy & Sons) and Kamalambal, grand- son of Mr&Mrs Veeragathipillai Rajaratnam and Mr&Mrs Thambiyah Muthuthamby, brother of Sivapalan (Switzerland), late Mahadevan, Kirija (London), Premalatha (London), Raja- ratnakumaran (London), Suthayini (Jaffna)

## NADARASA - RAJAYOGESWARY

- Wife of late NagendramNadarasa (Chartered Civil Engineer Gammon UK), daughter of the late Mr Arumugam and Mrs Nallamuthu (Kondavil), daughter-in-law of Nagendram and Saraswathy (Urleu), mother of Thirukumar (CEO Hutch) and Thirusenthil (Deputy School Head USA), grandmother of Purshaiyna, Prabeenash, Nathan and Celeste, mother-in-law of Yogalathagini (Ex HNB) and Claudia Nadarasa (Teacher USA), sister of late Nageswary and late Naguleswary, sister- in-law of Sivasubramaniam (UK), Ponampalam (UK), late Paratharajah (UK), Shanmugarajah (UK), late Mahathevy, late Thuvarathevy, Thangaluxmy (Canada), late Mahaluxmy and Pathmadevi (Switzerland), late Somasundram and late Subramaniam,

## GNANAPRAGASAM - DAVID

(Rtd District Inspector of Sri Lanka Railways) - Loving son of late Jacob and Susan Gnanapragasam, beloved husband of Devarani, loving father of Sudharshini, Dilshan and Natasha, loving brother of Josephine, Agnes, Therese, Shanthi, Thevi and Saroja, father-in-law of Babu and Kokila, precious grand- father of Kevin, brother-in-law of Devaraja, Dharmaraja and Dharmarani.

## ANTON IGNATIUS LAZARUS GUNANAYAGAM

(Emieritus Principal - St. Charles Maha Vidiyalam, Jaffna) Son of late Mr&Mrs T.A. Lazarus, husband of Fabiola Selva- rani Gunanayagam, father of Avanthi, Ramesh, Parajeev and father-in-law of Dallas, Anjalin, grandfather of Oliver, Joliver, Guliver, Bianca, Abijah & Aaron, brother of Perinapanaya- gam, late Ariyanayagam, Pakiyanayagam and late Selvanaya- gam, brother-in-law of Inthri, Diomond, Devi, Joyce and late Stephen & late Darmapragasam

## TRIBUTE

# Sengai Aaliyan, a great Sri Lankan Tamil literary figure (1941-2016)



Dr. Kandiah Kunarasa popularly known by his pen name Senkai Aaliyan passed away in Jaffna at his residence in Brown Road on Feb 28th at the age of 75 causing great grief among the thousands of his devoted readers worldwide. For half a century, he rode like a colossal figure among the Tamil writers in Sri Lanka churning out dozens of short stories, novels and research publications.

Unlike many of his peers he has done a unique service in Tamil literary field documenting the history, culture and politics of Eelam Tamils. He took great efforts to portray the unique life styles of Tamils residing in various parts of the country under harsh conditions. His variety of short stories clearly brought to light the social problems prevailing in the Tamil community and every one of his stories contained a treasure trove of great resources. Many of them have served as refer- ence materials for the student population in the island nation of Sri Lanka for decades. His use of polished language in his writings elevated to him a unique position to be admired by his colleagues as well by the thousands of his readers.

For a long time, there was a general feeling among Tamils in Srilanka that not much infor- mation about the ancient history of Tamils was included in History text books. Sinai Aaliyan made great attempts to remedy this situation by writing books such as Nanthikkadal, Kanthavel Koaddam, Kaathal Koaddai, Kuveni, Nallai Na- gar Nool, Eelaththavar Varalaaru, History of Jaffna Fort, Thamilar Thesam etc all of which contained very valuable historical information for the future generations.

This prolific writer has also successfully ven- tured into various other fields. His novels Vaadai- kaatru and Puthinam have been made into films. His scores of novels including Iravin Mudivu, Piralyam, Kaaddaru, Kanavugal Katpanaigal, Aasaigal, Kankaikarai Oaram, Alaikadalthaan Oyaatho, Muttaththu Ottaippanai, Yaanai, Ma- layil Nananainthu, Veyilil kaainthu, Malaikka- kalam, Mannin Thagam, Yenma BhoomiI, Yaga Kundam, Aarukaal Madam, Kidugu Veli, Oh Antha Alagiya Ulagam, Kaatrilkalakkum Peru- mouchukkal. Oru Maiyya Vaddangal, Maranan-

gal Malintha Bhoomi, Vaanum Kanalsoriyum, Poare' Nee Po etc have touched on various social topics and were eagerly welcomed by the read- ers. His Short stories such as AkkiniI Kunchu, Chithira Purnami, Ithayame' Amaithykol, Ira- vu nera Payanigal, Koodillaatha Naththaigalum Oadillatha Aamaigalum, Sambavi as well as his humorous novels such as Aaachchi Payanam Po- giraal and Koththiyin Kathal have successfully brought to light the problems faced by the Tamils in Jaffna peninsula as well as in Wannai. In addi- tion, these writings have focused on the economic woes, aspirations, dreams and imaginations of the people facing variety of socioeconomic prob- lems.

In addition to literary creations, Sengai Aa- liyan used his knowledge of excellence in the subject of Geography obtained at Peradeniya University to produce a number of Text books in Geography. Thousands of students over the past decades have greatly benefitted by using these excellent publications.

He served as Government agent in Kilinoch- chi for a few years. Later on he also served as a registrar of University of Jaffna utilizing his ad- ministrative talent to the maximum.

Not only a prolific writer, he is also a well known critic in the literary world. He has more than thirty novels and three accomplishments in the sphere of fictional history to his credit. Dr. Kunarasa was awarded the Sahithiya Mandala awards more than six times for his achievements in writing Novels and short stories. Some of his short stories had been translated into Sinhala and published in weeklies such as Silumina, Vi- varana, Ravaya, and so on. One of his novels, named 'The Beast', was translated into English.

Tamils in Sri Lanka as well among Diaspora have lost a unique scholar and a great literary figure. Though he is no more Senkai Aaliyaan he will continue to live for many more years among his prolific creations.

May his soul rest in peace.

**By: Raymond Rajabalan**

# HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA



BY  
THULASI MUTTULINGAM

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](http://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:

## Stories of people resettling in Sri Lanka after long years as refugees in India.....

### "Rightful citizen of one country travelling with dignity"

"I was 25 when I went as a refugee by boat to India in 1997 as the war had become unbearable here. We had to sell our female relatives' jewellery to hire the boat as it was expensive to charter these boat trips. We could have afforded flights at less than those rates but the North was cut off from Colombo at that point.

We needed to get passes from both the LTTE and the Army to get to Colombo which were impossible to get - and never given to families as a whole, precisely to stop us escaping as refugees.

So anyway, the boat ride took us only two hours. I have heard horror stories from others about terrifyingly long journeys involving choppy waves or shootings at sea but our own was uneventful, thank god.

The boatmen dropped us off somewhere on land at midnight and told us that we were only a few kilometres away from Rameshwaram; that when it dawned we could make our way on foot there.

Except when it dawned, we discovered we had been abandoned in an uninhabited islet. There were children in our group who were hungry and thirsty by this time and it was heartbreaking to see them cry. So twice I tried to swim out to Rameshwaram - but the currents were strong and I kept getting swept away.

Eventually around noon, an Indian fisher boat spotted and rescued us."

"They treated us well in India. The fishermen were so sympathetic that they gave their own meagre gruel rations to us as we were so hungry. They dropped us off at the police station which was standard procedure. The police were polite to us too. They registered us as refugee arrivals from Sri Lanka and took us to the Mandavam camp in Rameshwaram specially set up for us Sri Lankan refugees."

What made you return?

"I don't want to say anything that would make Indians think I am being ungrateful. We have a lot to be grateful to them for and I am mindful of that fact. They were consistently forbearing and courteous - despite the fact that some unruly elements in our midst kept pushing their buttons. If the tables were turned I doubt we would have been as forbearing as a host community.

Even so, we were only stateless refugees there and had no hope of being anything else, no matter how long we lived there, how well we integrated or how productive or qualified we became.

Some of our people are still bitter about the 'British Colonizers' and the 'White man's hegemony', but had I made it to the UK in 1997, I would probably have been a citizen by now with labour rights and citizenship rights in place. We did not / could not have that in India.

So I always felt like our lives were in limbo as stateless people."

"No matter how well-qualified, you can never get a government job there in India. Over here, the Sri Lankan government has given an assurance that SL citizens who return as Indian graduates still have a chance of being absorbed into the SL government sector. Its not happening widely and there are glitches in this process still, but at least its happening - which gives us hope.

We could get jobs in the private sector there but even there our labour rights are not guaranteed so many of our youths end up as daily wage labourers. In my case, I was a driver for over 10 years - without a license as the laws kept changing on whether Sri Lankan refugees were allowed driving licences or not.

We don't have those kind of hassles in Sri Lanka which is such a relief."

Do you miss anything about India now that you are back in Jaffna?

"The cost of living is much cheaper over there. Shops were more easily accessible too as were various entertainment facilities. We lived in Chennai which is a huge town and compared to that Jaffna has not much to offer."

That is the difference between city life and rural life. Have you considered relocating to Colombo?

"No, why would I? I do not know Colombo at all. That would be too foreign a place for me. I came back from Tamil Nadu,



India because I felt alien in a land where the people still spoke my language and I could communicate. How much more alien would I feel in a land where I don't know their language and they don't know mine?"

"What I like best about having resettled in Jaffna now is the acceptance that I am a citizen here with the proper paperwork in place to prove it. That brings with it a dignity of its own, which was missing from my life all those years as a refugee.

I returned to Sri Lanka in 2012, and have flown back to India twice since then to visit family and friends. I had a valid passport and valid visas. The immigration officials let me through without suspicious glances or gruelling questions. I was treated like I deserved to be there, not as a suspicious potential migrant. And that is when it slammed home to me that I had made the right decision.

The challenges of relocating to Jaffna after spending most of my youthful years away from it were many. I had constant doubts as to whether I had made the right decision. But that first flight back to India clinched it. As the rightful citizen of one country travelling with dignity to another country with all my paperwork in place - I finally knew I had made the right decision."

## Why should they be landless refugees in India?

I was a businessman with my own lorries transporting produce in Jaffna. We had to leave all that behind in 1990 when the war intensified here, and fled to India by boat.

I went from owning my own fleet of trucks in Sri Lanka to being a truck driver myself, driving for others in India.

We were used to large houses standing in extensive gardens in Jaffna. In India, each family was given a 10 x 11 feet room to occupy at the refugee camps. It was a massive change to come to terms with at first, but after awhile we got used to it. When we landed there, there was no electricity in the camp. Conditions were hot and stifling. Eventually someone learned to illegally tap electricity to his room - and we all followed suit. We were caught a few years later and fined INR 35000 for it. Things were in turmoil for some time but fortunately politicians who felt sorry for us took up our cause at the Tamil Nadu State Assembly and the fine was waived. We also got free electricity thereafter.

The Indian Government actually took good care of us - they provided us with monthly food rations and stipends to meet our family needs. Widows, the disabled and the elderly were provided extra. Yet at the end of the day, we were only stateless refugees there. Our children who grew up there have gotten used to that system, but we who remembered what our lives were like here before the war could not reconcile completely with our changed circumstances.

I was grateful for the fact that I had escaped the war, life and limb intact with my family. But I couldn't help being worried about relatives back here. I was also worried about what my children's and grandchildren's future in India as stateless refugees would be. But during the war years, I just had to swallow it. What else was there to do?

I tried hard to repress my memories of Jaffna that I could not recreate in India, but it was hard. Even the food; you can get pretty much the same type of food in Tamil Nadu, as in Jaffna but you couldn't get everything. Our lovely Rasavalli (purple yam) pudding for example. They did not grow those in TN. We eventually discovered a related species from Kerala - but it was white. We would buy them to have a taste of the Rasavalli from Sri Lanka but looking at that white pudding put me off. I missed even the vibrant purple colour of our beloved yam. These are small things but sometimes they really wreck your



consciousness with the fact that you are exiled from your home country with all that you once took for granted within it - perhaps forever more."

"I returned to Jaffna, for the first time since leaving, only last month. 26 long years since I saw my hometown. I am still finding my bearings; still getting used to being in a big house and not sharing a wall with the neighbours where we could hear their every conversation. Yet, unfamiliar as Jaffna has gotten over the intervening years, I can't help but feel boundless joy at being home. I have sent word to my family in India - my wife and the families of my two elder sons and daughter who have married and settled there, to pack up and come home. My youngest son who is still single accompanied me on this trip so he is already here."

Will your married children settled there agree to relocate here?

"Huh? I am the family patriarch. If I say so, of course they have to obey. I have only their best interests at heart anyway. Their lands and their citizenship are back here. They need to come back and reclaim them."

We are staying at my brother's house currently. My own has long since fallen to ruin during the war years, and what was left of it was dismantled by looters. The roof, the doors, the windows, even the cement walls - all have been taken away. My property have been taken over by squatters. Those are my children's property. Why should they be landless refugees in India, when they can reclaim their due rights here?"

Like

## Bullied at school for their Indian Tamil dialect and accent

"We returned from India only last year. My husband and I are glad to be back but the children grew up there. They get bullied at school for their Indian Tamil dialect and accent.

They are struggling to follow the lessons at school too, due to these differences in language usage.

He came crying home recently saying his teacher had beaten him and he wanted to go back to India. Apparently, he had come into the possession of a stick while playing in the playground. Here we call a stick 'thady' but in India, they call it 'kutchi'. The teacher had instructed him to get rid of the 'thady' which he didn't understand. So the teacher had wrested the stick off him and hit him with it.

I guess it will take some time for these kind of issues to settle down."



Like



# THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA - Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple

## MAHA LAKSHMI LAKSHARCHANA

By Kidambi Raj

Member, Board of Trustees

This year the Mahalashmi Laksharchana (repetitive chanting of Goddess's Names and attributes) one Lakh (100,000) times was celebrated for ten days starting on Saturday, February 13th and ending on February 22nd. This was achieved by five priests chanting the 1,000 names once in the morning and again in the evening for 10 days.

The Goddess of Energy, is said to have appeared in the form of Sri Maha Lakshmi on a Friday in the Tamil month of Thai (January – February). All Fridays in this month are considered very auspicious.

Fridays in this month, are ideal days to approach the all-pervading Goddess Shakti. She would bless the devotees with the secret on how to be successful in life. Goddess Shakti in the forms of, Ichcha Shakti, Kriya Shakti and Gnana Shakti graces the devotees with the compassion of a mother for all beings.

**Ichcha Shakti** (the Goddess who will fulfill devotee's wishes): The word Ichcha means desire. It relates to a person's creativity, motivation and will power. One can modify his or her Ichcha Shakti through worshipping God. Offering prayers to this Goddess during these Fridays will help in providing answers to all questions on how to be successful in life

**Kriya Shakti** (the Goddess who assists us in all our actions): Kriya Shakti represents the power of action. It is the ability to act efficiently to fulfill desires and it relates to the physical body. Offering prayers to this Goddess during Thai Fridays will help improve our Kriya Shakti and also guide us in all endeavours.

**Gnana Shakti** (the goddess who will bless us with knowledge): Gnana Shakti denotes the power of knowledge, which leads us towards divinity and is the key to wisdom. It is the ultimate ability to realize the soul or Atma. Offering prayers to this Goddess during Thai Fridays will bless us with knowledge. The serenity that rests in her face can soothe our mind and soul. She is also the Goddess who would intensify devotee's everlasting looks.

**Significance of performing the Laksharchana:**

All Hindu temples they perform Laksharchanas at least once a year to

invoke Goddess Lakshmi and get her blessings for Peace, wealth, Health and Prosperity, not just for their devotees for people around the world. Particularly at the present times in this world Her Blessings are very badly needed.

### About Goddess Lakshmi:

Goddess Lakshmi, the power and consort of Vishnu, the preserver, she is the power of multiplicity and the goddess of fortune, both of which are necessary for the preservation. Sri or Lakshmi as depicted in the vedas, is the goddess of wealth and fortune, power and beauty. Some may think that Sri and Lakshmi are two separate deities but if one looks at their descriptions, one can conclude that the two represent the same deity. Some scholars say that Sri was a pre-vedic deity connected with fertility, water and agriculture. She was later fused with Lakshmi, the vedic goddess of beauty.

In puranas, it says that she was incarnated as the daughter of the sage Bhrigu and his wife Khyati. She was later born out Ksheer Sagar (ocean of milk) while being churned. Hence, her appellation, Ksheer Samudra Raja Kanya. As consort of Lord Vishnu, she was born as his spouse whenever he incarnated. When Vishnu incarnated as Vamana, Parasura, Rama, Krishna, she appeared as, Padma or Kamala, Dharani, Sita and Rukmini respectively. She is inseparable from Vishnu as speech from meaning or knowledge from intellect, or good deeds from righteousness.

As Vishnu represents all that is male, Lakshmi represents all that is female. In the company of Vishnu, she is shown with two hands only. When worshipped in a temple, as Lakshmi, she is shown seated on a lotus throne, with four hands holding Padma, shanka (conch), amritha kalasa (pot of ambrosia or nectar) and bilva fruit. Amritha Kalasa also signifies immortality. Sometimes, another kind of fruit, the mahalunga (citron) is shown instead of bilva. Her four hands signify her power to grant the four types of purusharthas (objectives of human beings), dharma (righteousness), artha (wealth), kama (bodily pleasures) and moksha (pinnacle of spiritual life). The lotuses in various stages blooming, represent the worlds and beings in various stages of evolution.

**The Eight Divine Forms of Lakshmi:**

There are eight forms of Goddess



Lakshmi known as Ashta Lakshmi, who presides over eight forms of wealth and prosperity, power, health, progeny, cattle, grains, gold and strength. All these forms are always depicted as seated on a lotus.

**Dhana Lakshmi:** She is depicted as six-armed, dressed in red silk, carrying chakra (discus), shanku (conch), kalasa (water pitcher with mango leaves and a coconut on it, bow-arrow, a lotus and an arm in Abhaya (protection) mudra with gold coins falling from it. She symbolizes material wealth and prosperity.

**Adi Lakshmi:** She is depicted as four-armed, carrying a lotus and a white flag, the other two arms in Abhaya mudra and Varada mudra. She symbolizes primeval Lakshmi of the Yantra.

**Vijaya Lakshmi:** She is depicted as eight-armed, wearing a red silk, carrying the chakra, shakh, sword. Pasha as her weapons, lotus and other two hands depicting, one as Abhaya Mudra to protect her devotees and the other as Varada Mudra to depict as ever giving. She symbolizes Victory over enemies as well as power and strength.

**Veera Lakshmi:** She is depicted as eight-armed, wearing red silk, carrying chakra, shakh, bow, arrow, trishul (or

sword) as her weapons, a bar of solid gold and the other two hands in Abhaya Mudra and Varada Mudra. She symbolizes bravery and strength.

**Gaja Lakshmi:** She is depicted as four-armed, wearing red silk, carrying two lotuses, other two hands in Abhaya Mudra and varada Mudra, surrounded by four elephants bathing her with water pots which symbolize abundant wealth. She symbolizes luxurious abundance.

**Santana Lakshmi:** She is depicted as six-armed, carrying two kalasas which are water pitchers with mango leaves as spiritual blessing, a hand in Abhaya Mudra and the other holding a child who holds a lotus. She symbolizes good progeny.

**Dhanya Lakshmi:** She is depicted as eight-armed, in green silk, holding two lotuses, Gada (mace), paddy crop, sugarcane, bananas, while the other two hands depict blessings s Abhaya Mudra and Varada Mudras. She symbolizes Grains and agriculture.

**Aishwarya Lakshmi:** She is depicted as four-armed, in white silk, holding two lotuses, while the other two hands are in Abhaya and Varada Mudras. She symbolizes beauty and strength.



# THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA - Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple

## INTERESTING INFORMATION ON ITEMS THAT ARE OFFERED TO HANUMAAN AND THE REASONS

By Kidambi Raj

Member, Board of Trustees

Hindus, during their worship either at home or at the temple offer different items to different deities. Generally we do them routinely since that is what has been done by our elders for years not necessarily understanding why it is offered.

For Hanumaan normally Butter and garland of Betal Leaves and Vada Maalaa re offered. There are specific reasons why they are offered.

### Why Butter ?

In olden days in India devotees bring fresh butter from their houses which they have themselves got from churning curds and gives it to the priest who applies it on Hanuman idol. Now a days both in India and overseas people buy butter from store and offer it to Hanumaan through the priest.

The reason is very interesting. It started from the time of Raamaa Raavana war. Raavana was trying his best to defeat Raamaa. But each of his weapons was squashed by Raamaa's arrows. Raamaa was being carried by Hanuman at that time. Raamaa did not have a ratha (chariot) like Raavana, whose ratha was magnificent.

Raavana was becoming frustrated and so changed his tactics. Instead of attacking Raamaa, he started to shoot at Hanumaan who was carrying Raamaa. Hanumaan had the boon of

immortality from Brahma, but that did not prevent him from getting injured. Raamaa began to fight like a whirlwind and soon Raavana ran from the battlefield. Our Lord Raama, tolerates any amount of hardship to himself, but cannot see His bhaktas (devotees) being troubled. So, when they retired to their camp, Raama made Hanumaan lie down and inspire of Hanumaan's protests called for cool butter and applied it Himself on Hanumaan's burning wounds. This was the reason behind the offering of butter to Hanumaan.

### Why Garland of Betal Leaves for Hanumaan ?

After the success in the war against Raavana, Sita Devi spotted Hanumaan in a Betal Leaf Garden and when Hanuman bowed to Her feet seeking Her blessings, Sita Devi plucked few betel leaves and showered on Hanumaan in order to bless him, so started the tradition.

Another story says that when Hanumaan conveyed the message from Sri Raama, Sita Devi garlanded Hanumaan with a betal vine as a token of Her joy and appreciation, as She could not find any flower nearby. Betal leaves should be made as a garland with a piece of arecanut (betal nut) in each leaf of the garland.

### Why Vada Mala for Hanumaan ?

Vada Mala is like a Pearl Necklace for Hanumaan. During the coronation



Ceremony of Lord Rama, Sita wanted to thank Hanumaan for his good heart and Seva. So she gave him a gift – A very beautiful necklace of pearls made of rarest quality. Hanumaan got the gift from Sita eagerly but he started to break each pearl. Rama, Sita and all the people who were in the Palace were wondering why Hanuman is breaking the pearl which was presented as Gift. Sita asked "Hanumaan, why do you break the pearls? Hanumaan replied " Mother, I feel happy for getting this gift from your holy hand. So I wanted to see if the pearls have the holy name of "Ram" written in it or any other aspect of Rama in it. I do not keep anything without Rama but I could not find him in any of the pearls. Sita asked "If you have Lord Rama in everything, is Rama within you also?"

To the surprise of everyone, Hanumaan ripped open his heart and showed it to Sri Rama, Sita and people present in the palace. What an amazing darshan it was. Lord Rama along with Sita was there in the heart of Sri Hanumaan.

Devotees are offering Vada Mala to Hanuman like how Sita gave Pearl Necklace to him. This way, we believe Hanuman will bite the Vadas happily to find if Rama is there in it. I believe Rama will surely be in the Vada Mala because it is offered to Hanumaan by his devotees with devotion.

Once a person hailing from North India was among the many who came to have darshan of Paramacharya of Kaanchi Mutt. He was seen in hesitan-

cy and Maha Periyavaa invited him to ask his doubt. The Northerner cleared his throat and said that Hanumaan is worshiped all over India but he was not able to understand why in South the people adorn Hanumaan with Vadamala made of Urud dhal mixed with pepper where as in North India they do with sweet Jaangiri. He also added that he had not received a convincing answer from anybody.

Paramacharyawas pleased to talk about Hanumaan. He began to explain first that children when they make some fuss to eat, the mother coaxes them to see the Moon outside and the child enjoys seeing the bright Moon and the cool breeze outside and finishes eating.

Similarly when Hanuman was a child, he took a liking to look at the Sun blazing in the Sky. He didn't stop with that. He went on to catch the Sun with his hand. At the same time, 'Rahu Devathaa' was also racing to catch the Sun God to eclipse the Sun. In the race between Hanumaan and Rahu, Hanumaan, being the son of Vayuthe Wind God (Vayuputhraa) won with ease. In appreciation of Hanumaan's valor, Rahu Deva sanctioned a boon in whoever worshiped Hanumaan with a food item made of urud dhal, will get relieved from Rahu Dosha or that Rahu Grahaa will not trouble them anymore. Further the item offered to Hanumaan should be in the form of a garland or bent like a serpent which is how Rahu God appears. Rahu also admitted that Urudh Dhal is his favorite cereal and food item prepared with Urudh Dhal is to his immense liking.

Paramacharya, having explained the significance of Vadamalaa aaradhanaa to Hanumaan, went on to bring out the background for the differences in the culture between the people in the South and North. South India is famous for salt cultivation, as North is for sugarcane. Vada is a food item made of urud dhal mainly with salt, also some pepper added for improving the taste. So people in South offer vadamaalaa aaradhanaa to Hanumaan.

But the Northerners prefer sweet to salt. However Jaangiri is made of mainly urud dhal only and that condition satisfies the rule imposed by Rahu God.



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# MAHAMAHAM – ONCE IN TWELVE YEARS CELEBRATIONS IN KUMBAKONAM IN SOUTH INDIA

By Kidambi Raj

Member, Board of Trustees, The Hindu Temple Society of Canada

The Masimahamis an annual event that is very auspicious and cherished (occurs) in Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu, South India, a beautiful and ancient holy place, in the month of Masi the 11th month in Tamil Calendar (Feb. – Mar.) in the star Maham the 10th of the 27 stars. Astronomically, Maham is a nakshatra in Leo sign (Simha Rasi) Mahamaham (greatest of all Masi Mahams), is the Masi Maham that comes

considered a very powerful astrological combination since Jupiter and Moon will be on the same constellation with the Sun on the other side, and so is considered very auspicious and highly beneficial as well. On this day of the festival, it is believed to bring all bodies of water together and enrich the temple tank with minerals. Similar to this a lake in Kotihar in Jammu and Kashmir gets full supply of water the same day, which otherwise remains empty and dry the other eleven years. Lord Brahma reconstructed the world after the last deluge, the Kumbakonam

rayu, 17. Varuna, 18. Vayu, 19. Yama and 20. Yamuna.

**Worship during the Festival:** During this festival, people from all over India flock to this place, Kumbakonam and have a dip in the tank, along with other devotees along with saints and holy men. All the rivers of India are believed to meet at the tank on this day and a purificatory bath at this tank on this day is considered equal to the combined dips in all the holy rivers of India. Festival deities from all the temples in and around Kumbakonam arrive at the tank at noon and all the deities bathe along with the devotees and this is called by a special term Theerthavari. This purificatory bath is believed to remove all the sins after the dip. In spite of the fact that about three quarter of a million people take a dip in the tank at that time, water purity is tested periodically in the past and did not show high levels of contamination.

**Temples connected with this Mahamaham:** Twelve major Siva temples around the country with ten of them in and around Kumbakonam and

all five Vaishnavite temples in Kumbakonam are involved in the festival. It is only appropriate that Kumbakonam is the hub of most Hindu temples in one area.

**Legend:** As per the legend, after the end of each era, the whole world immerses in a deluge on account of the wrath of Hindu God Siva for the sins committed humans on earth. Brahma, the God of Creation, recreated the world during the start of current Kali Yuga. Lord Siva declared that after the end of a previous era, a divine pot would reach a holy spot. As the divine spot reached Kumbakonam, Lord Siva in the form of a hunter, broke the pot with an arrow. The pot broke into several parts and scattered around which was the cause for so many temples in and around Kumbakonam. Brahma prayed to Lord Siva to allow pilgrims to visit the tank during the sacred occasion. Lord Siva agreed to his request and is believed to arrive along with Lord Vishnu and other celestial deities at the centre of the tank on this Mahamaham day.



once every 12 years. This year, 2016 happened to be the Mahamaham year and was celebrated in Kumbakonam on Monday the 22nd of February.

**Astronomical Significance:** Sun takes a year to go around the earth. This festival is celebrated in the month when the full moon occurs as moon and is passing Maha nakshatra (Leo sign in Simha Rasi) and the Sun is on the other end in the opposite Aquarius sign (Kumbha Rasi). Jupiter or Guru takes twelve years to go around completing one full revolution and during this time, it spends one year in Leo once every twelve years. Thus, Mahamaham occurs once in twelve years when the planet Jupiter's residence in Leo coincides with full moon in Leo. This is

temple was dedicated to him.

**The Mahamaham Tank:** This tank is located in the heart of the town of Kumbakonam. The tank covers an area of 6.2 acres and is in a trapezoidal shape. It is surrounded by sixteen small mandapams (shrines) and has twenty wells inside the tank. These wells are named after twenty holy rivers flowing across the great country of India. These wells are called Theertham (Holy water).

The names of the twenty Theerthams are: 1. Agni, 2. Bayoshini, 3. Brahma, 4. Cauvery, 5. Deva, 6. Es-hana, 7. Ganga, 8. Godavari, 9. Indira, 10. Kanya, 11. Kubera, 12. Kumari, 13. Narmada,

14. Niruthi, 15. Saraswati, 16. Sa-



## SAVE SHALINI NAGARAJ DURHAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION'S HELPING HEARTS INITIATIVE RAISED \$1100 CAD

Shalini Nagaraj a 14-year-old girl from St.Philomena's Girls High School in Bellary - Karnataka, who goes to school with her friend Tanushree, whose mother Mrs.Anuradha Narayanan was my childhood classmate. I have known Anuradha since Grade 6!

Anuradha's heart broke when she heard Shalini has been diagnosed with CML Chronic Blast which is a type of Blood Cancer. She desperately reached out to all of our friends seeking their support. I decided to join hands with her, to save this child's life through DTA's Helping Hearts Initiative.

Shalini was undergoing Chemotherapy in Kidwai Hospital in Bangalore. As of December 22nd, Shalini is an out-patient at Narayana Hrudayalaya Hospital in Bangalore, where she is being treated by Dr.Sunil Bhat. As per her doctor, Shalini must undergo 2 sessions of Chemotherapy before going through the Bone Marrow Transplant in order to survive. The hospital gave us a quote for the bone marrow transplant which will cost around INR 20 Lakhs, which is around \$ 40,000 CAD. Few tests have been done recently and the doctor will be able to determine the next procedure in a week or two, based on the reports.

Sincere thanks to her school Principal Mrs.Shantha Selvaraj, who spread the plight of Shalini and helped raise around INR 5 Lakhs (CAD \$ 10000). Till now the family has raised about INR 3.5 Lakhs (CAD \$7000). With the generosity of few other, they were able to raise about INR 2 Lakhs (CAD \$ 4000). As Shalini is from a middle class family and personally do not have the resources to fund the cost of prescribed treatment, her family is desperately seeking our support to raise the remaining balance of around \$ 20,000 CAD.

I posted a request to donate funds for Shalini in my Facebook on behalf of Durham Tamil Association, which has earned few donors. I sincerely place my gratitude with heartfelt thanks to the following donors who donated generously.

Date of the surgery will be determined by the doctor and the hospital, based on the time required to reach the fundraising target. We kindly request you open your heart and donate any amount you are able to save this young child's life, at the earliest.

Please feel free to contact me at 9054287007, 6479934937 if you have any questions. Please include Shalini in your prayers.

www.savemylifeshalini.com

Uma Suresh  
Program Coordinator  
Durham Tamil Association



SHALINI CURRENTLY UNDERGOING CHEMO IN NARAYANA HRUDAYALAYA HOSPITAL IN BANGALORE

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Mrs. Vasuhi Santhirarajah - \$100 CAD        | Mr. Kaeman - \$100 CAD   |
| Mr. Senthil Thirugnana - \$250 CAD           | Mrs. Thurka Arulendran - \$50 CAD  |
| (Deposited in the parent's account directly) | Mrs. Hariffa - INR Rs.5000   |
| Mr. Senthana Nadaraja - \$100 CAD            | (Which is equal to \$100 CAD deposited in to parent's account directly in Indian Currency) |
| Mrs. Sinthika Kanagaratnam - \$50 CAD        | The total money raised till now - \$1100 CAD.  |
| Mrs. Sheila Gadan - \$100 CAD                |  |
| Mr. Easwaran Periatnamby - \$250 CAD         |  |



# Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham Celebrates Tamil Cultural Month – January 2016

By Lavanya Pathmanathan  
-TCASD Youth.

The purpose of Tamil Heritage Month Cultural Festival is to educate not only the Tamil population, but the general public, children and youth about our native geographic location, societal values, religion, culture, and tradition.

By hosting this event and inviting the Tamils living throughout the Durham region, as well as ministers of parliament from all four cities, councillors, mayors, and their staff to this event, we hope to further educate the citizens of Durham on our beautiful Tamil heritage.

This is an excellent opportunity for the Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham to promote their organization, mingle with Tamil citizens new to the area, connect and network with other Tamil Associations and busi-

nesses. In the process, TCASD hopes to create respect, mutual understanding, and beneficial relationships with many Tamils as well as with those who live in the Durham community.

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

Tamils have a great tradition of heritage and culture that developed over 2,000 years ago and still continues to flourish today. We must bring our beautiful history into the limelight and continue to promote and preserve the Tamil heritage.

Every year Tamil Heritage month

committee chooses a topic in which we focus on. This year Tamil Heritage month committee decided to focus on the famous Tamil poet and author, Thiruvalluvar.

His work is well known throughout the Tamil community and in many countries across the world. One of his most famous contributions to Tamil literature is the Thirukkural; known as the "Scared Couplets" It can be considered a guide for human morals and the betterment of life.

There are three sections in the Thirukkural. The first section, Aram, states good ethical behaviours expected by everyone. The second section, Porul, discusses the right manner in which the government and society should behave. The final section, Kaamam, explains the love between men, women and all. In total, the Thirukkural contains 1330 couplets, which are broken

down into many chapters.

TCASD celebrated the 3rd Annual Tamil Heritage month celebration at Pickering Town Centre on 30th of January 2016. There were many interesting cultural programs, competitions, speeches and few of the community individuals were honored for their outstanding service and continuous contribution to the community.

The beauty of the Thirukkural can be translated into many other languages and can be relatable to all. Below are the few lines from the Thirukkural to show you how graceful and hypnotic they are:

Loveless people hold everything to themselves. Those, who are filled with love, bear even their bones for others. Like life is linked to the flesh, Love is integral to life. Love yields affection for all, which leads to invaluable friendships.

## GILLETTE LAUNCHES NEW FUSION PROSHIELD™ WITH LUBRICATION BEFORE AND AFTER THE BLADES TO SHIELD AGAINST IRRITATION

Study shows most guys who shave take about 170 strokes with their razor which causes irritation. For ultimate closeness and comfort, Gillette has changed its blade cartridges so guys don't have to change the way they shave.

According to recent studies, most guys take about 170 strokes every time they shave, and 120 of them are re-strokes over the same area of the face after the initial strokes have wiped away most of the protective shave gel. Despite all of the advances in blade technology, many guys still experience some irritation, largely due to these re-strokes. Instead of expecting guys to change how they shave, Gillette® has made its best cartridge even better to shield guys from irritation. The new Gillette Fusion® ProShield™ with lubrication before and after the blades shields against irritation during every shave – no matter how many strokes he takes.

Guys have many habits that get them looking their best. But they often do these and other typical activities throughout the day involuntarily. Some guys may puff up their chest when feeling provoked, stroking their facial hair when thinking, sucking in their belly when seeing an attractive person and taking a surprising number of strokes every time they shave.

When it comes to shaving, guys re-stroke over the same area, wiping away the shave gel. Shaving over the same spot without lubrication can cause skin irritation, redness and bumps

that keep guys from looking and feeling their best. That's why Gillette developed Fusion ProShield, engineered to shield against irritation, with new lubrication before the blades in addition to the Lubra strip after the blades, while still delivering incredible closeness.

"With the latest razor technology, excessive re-stroking isn't necessary for a close shave, but old habits are hard to break," said Stew Taub, Director of Shave Care R&D at Gillette. "At Gillette, we constantly look for solutions to help improve the shave for guys, and that is why we are introducing Fusion ProShield with lubrication before and after the blades, to help shield from irritation during the shave. We have changed our blade cartridges so guys don't need to change the way they shave."

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Gillette rebuilt shaving with the Fusion ProGlide with FlexBall technology, and has now changed the face of cartridge technology with the Fusion ProShield. More than 25 million men have switched to FlexBall and together with Fusion ProShield, the shave experience has just gotten even better with Gillette's most advanced razor.

Gillette Fusion ProShield will be available at food, drug and mass merchandise stores in Canada starting on early February 2016 for a suggested retail price of \$14.99. Retail price is at the sole discretion of the retailer.

### About Gillette

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### Feedback by Monsoon Journal

Monsoon Journal had the direct experience to use the product recently and endorse for the qualities of the new product. This product greatly diminishes irritation that is usually associated with razors.



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12.00 Noon – 1.00 Pm	Buffet Lunch (Indian menu)	
1.00pm – 2.00pm	ASPE Updates	Jordan Glazier & Kyle Fic Ernst & Young (E&Y)
2.15 pm – 5.15 pm	Ten Practical Topics for Accountants in Leadership	Stephen Priddle CPA, CA, CMA Well known CPA speaker

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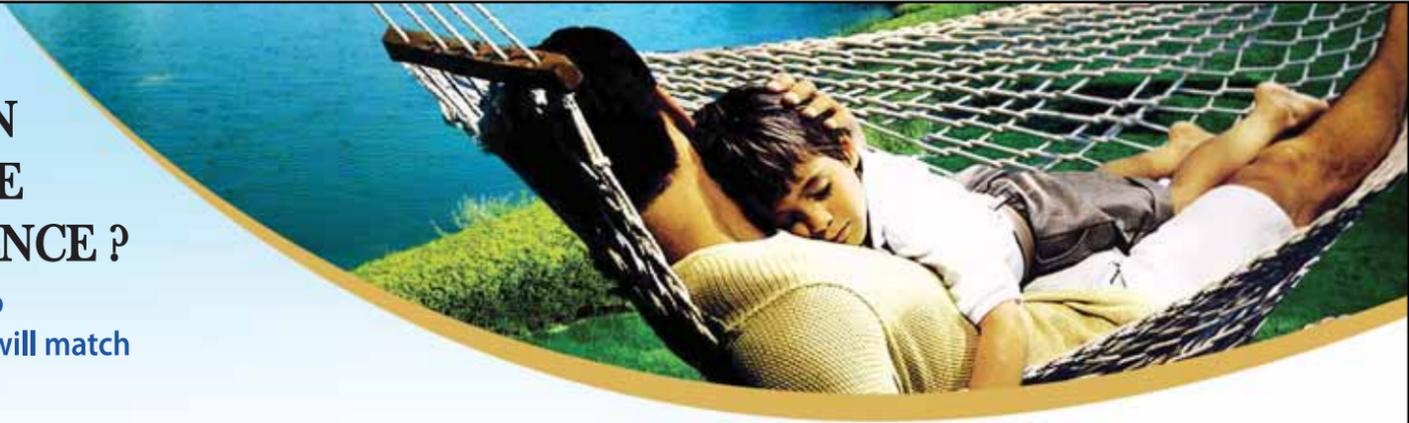
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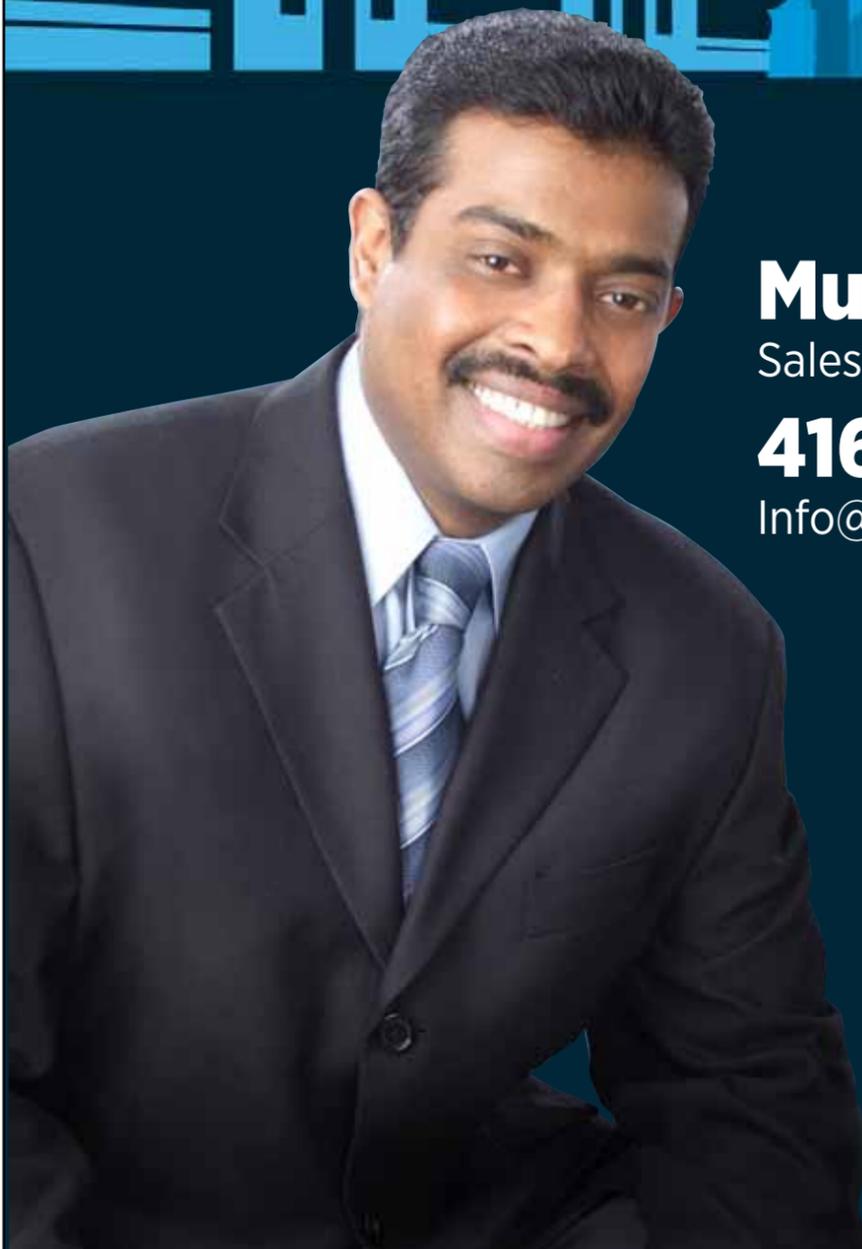
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Chief Justice K. Sripavan By Siva Sivapragasam Justice Sripavan, the senior most Supreme Court Judge, has been appointed as the Chief...

January 30, 2015, 8:58 PM

### U.S. cautions Sri Lanka on challenges ahead

1 day ago

Pledges assistance to rebuild economy, prevent corruption, ensure good governance and human rights By Siva Sivapragasam The United States has cautioned the new Sri Lankan Government of the challenges it faced ahead while complementing the Government for what it has achieved [...]

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### Canada will continue to encourage progress in devolution of power, accountability and reconciliation in Sri Lanka

Baird Welcomes Reinstatement of Sri Lankan Chief Justice Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird January 30, 2015 – Foreign Affairs...

January 30, 2015, 9:44 AM

### New Era of Illuminating Engineering – Solid-State Lighting (LED) on Human Health

By: Uthayan Thuraiarajah Lighting is closely related to human emotion. According to the global health research statistics from World...

January 29, 2015, 9:50 PM

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Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne hosted a reception to Celebrate



### Canadian Political Leaders Confident on the Charm of Thai Pongal Ushering Positive Change in Sri Lanka

by Harrish Thirukumaran On January 17, 2015, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) held its 8th annual...



### Thai Pongal & Tamil Heritage Month

Thai Pongal January 14, 2015 A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER On behalf of the Government...

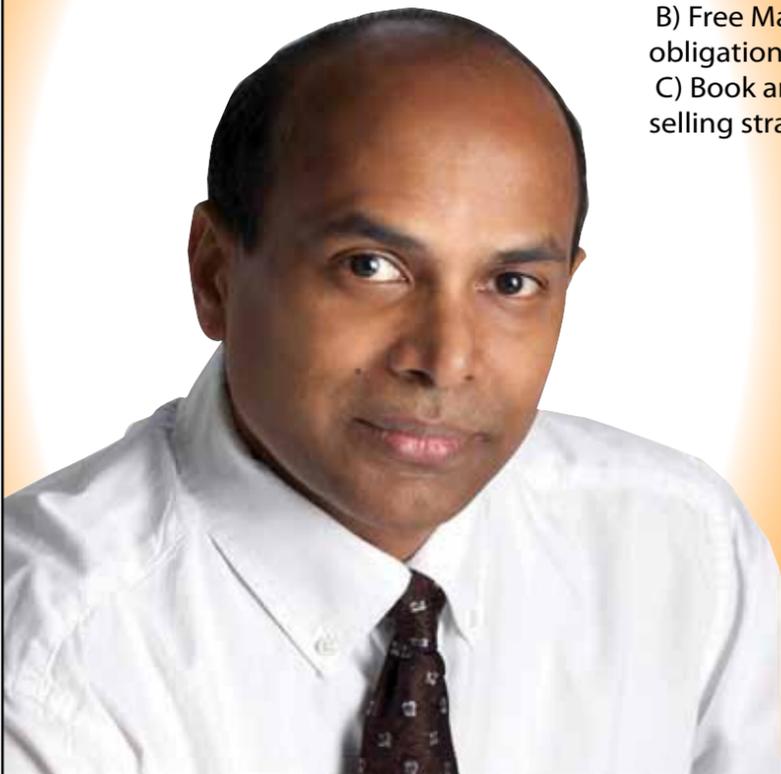
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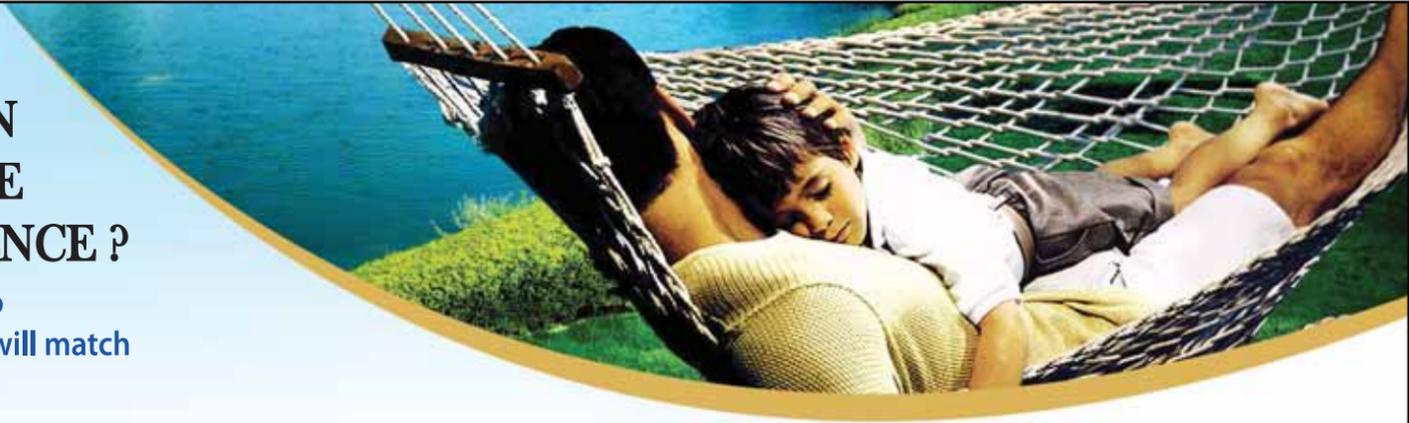
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