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presents

**MONTAGE AWARDS 2018**



**Sunday, May 6, 2018 | 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.**  
**Civic Centre, Scarborough**  
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# Monsoon Journal

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**Emil Alphonsus** CA, CPA, CGA

## Thulasi Muttulingam, Journalist based in Jaffna, Sri Lanka North at Monsoon Journal Event in Toronto



Thulasi Muttulingam

Monsoon Journal is delighted on the participation of Thulasi Muttulingam at 'Montage Awards 2018', celebrating South Asian Heritage Month and 12th Anniversary of Monsoon Journal on May 6th at 2 PM at Scarborough Civic Centre. This is the first visit of Thulasi Muttulingam to Canada.

Thulasi's writings have been published in Monsoon Journal since November 2013.

Thulasi Muttulingam is based in Jaffna Sri Lanka, from where she concentrates on writing investigative, in-depth, articles on matters of social issues in post-war Sri Lanka.

Her writings cover challeng-

es faced by post-war society on employment and out-migration, issues faced by women and children in patriarchal strongholds, and societal upheavals and conflicts in general. She also regularly intersperses her writing with positive news as she believes that good news should make the news too.

She is the only journalist writing in English to a mass audience to be based in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, and as such her dispatches are highly valued for their original content, from a region where people hunger for news, yet do not get enough of.

Contd. on page 5

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## Canadian Tamil Business Community celebrates 'CTCC 20th Awards Gala' with woman President at the helm

by Siva Sivapragasam

The Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce which represents the Canadian Tamils Business Community celebrated its annual 20th Awards Gala recently with a well-attended audience at the prestigious Hilton Suites in Markham.

CTCC's incumbent first female President Dilani Gunarajah welcomed the guests and made an impressive speech about the role of the Chamber and its contribution to the Tamil business community. She paid a glowing tribute to the Award winners and thanked all the spon-

sors of this year's event, her colleagues in the Board, the Awards Selection committee, the Media and the advertisers, for making the event a success. She also thanked the guests for their presence and their support in supporting the Gala to make it a successful event. Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne was also present at the Gala and spoke about the contribution of the Canadian Tamil community.

The keynote Speaker at this year's Gala was Susan Uthayakumar who is the Country President of Schneider Canada, a company which is a leader in Power Management. The guest Speaker at the Gala was Rocco Rossi, President & CE,

Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC).

This year's award winners were the following:

- Most Outstanding Community Service Person Award**  
- Karthigesu Yoganathan.
- Best Entrepreneur Award**  
- Navam Jagan
- Best Woman Entrepreneur Award**  
- Ms. Sharmilli Thangarajah
- Best Marketing Award**  
- Chandran Rasalingam
- Best Young Entrepreneur Award**  
- Jay Vasantharajah

More pictures on Page 36



CTCC President Dilani Gunarajah

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# Vibrant Festival of Colours gala supports cardiac care at Markham Stouffville Hospital

Markham, ON (May 2, 2018) — On Saturday, April 28, colourful Indian attire and saris filled the Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites as 500 guests came together to enjoy delicious Indian cuisine and dancing.

Guests also took part in a raffle and door prize giveaways all to transform cardiac care at Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH).

In partnership with leaders of the South Asian community—the Festival of Colours presented by RBC was an incredible success.

CBC Weather Specialist Karen Johnson hosted the event and was joined by City of Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Deputy Mayor Jack Heath and several other city councillors.

Dr. Ajai Pasricha, General Internist, MSH helped kick off the fundraising with a live equipment appeal that raised over \$150,000 in support of the purchase of a new Echocardiography System complete with stress echo and transesophageal echo capabilities. The new system completes advanced cardiac ultrasounds at the patient's bedside and provides stunning visualization and analysis of cardiac function for the most confident and timely diagnosis.

"It is incredible to witness the community come together to help make a lasting impact on the lives of the many patients who turn to MSH in their time of need," said Nita Shastri, Event Co-Chair. "There is nothing more beautiful than the hope of saving one more life."

Shastri also thanked the

Gulshan&Pyrali G. Nanji Family Foundation, Lead Donor of the event, "Your support is deeply appreciated and we are truly grateful for your commitment to our hospital."

Traditional Indian dishes were served family style followed by a live Jalebi dessert station in the foyer. An energetic performance by the the Folk N Guys inspired guests to hit the dance floor.

"We look forward to carrying on this tradition of community giving and inspiring others to help ensure leading edge care is provided to our friends, neighbours and families," said Bill Bachra, Event Co-Chair.

At the end of the night, Lakshmi Kotra of Toronto went home with the raffle Grand Prize—a 14KT white gold diamond ring, generously donated by Ron Hulse and Karen Chadwick.

Final fundraising results are being tallied as donations continue to be made. To donate, please call 905-472-7373 ext. 6606 or for a full list of raffle winners and photos please visit [mshf.on.ca/festivalofcolours](http://mshf.on.ca/festivalofcolours).

### About Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation exists to enable the growth of Markham Stouffville Hospital by raising funds and awareness for its ongoing priorities and needs. Government can't fund all of the hospital's needs. Donations from the community fund life-saving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class health care at Markham Stouffville Hospital.



The 2018 Festival of Colours Committee



(L) Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation (R) Karen Johnson, Emcee and CBC Weather Specialist



Michelle Cowan, Regional VP, RBC, Markham Region. RBC returned as Presenting Sponsor of the 2018 Festival of Colours



Shadow Entertainment performs an upbeat fusion between Western and South Asian culture in the foyer



(L-R) Bill Bachra, Event Co-Chair, Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation, Richkesh and Alisha Lakhani, members of the Nanji Family, Lead Donor, Frank Scarpitti, Mayor, City of Markham, Nita Shastri, Event Co-Chair

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## from the publisher's desk

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# A Plea for Ontario's South Asian Community to Vote this June 7, 2018

On June 7, 2018, Ontarians will be heading to the polls for its 42nd general election in the history of Canada's second largest province. This is being written as a plea to members of Ontario's diverse Tamil and South Asian community to express their democratic right to vote in the electoral process, especially amongst the younger generation like myself. Some of the more highly visible political parties that will be running in this election are the Ontario Liberal Party, Progressive Conservative (PC) Party of Ontario, the New Democratic Party and the Green Party of Ontario.

To recap recent election-related events, the Ontario PC Party was hit by political scandal involving the former PC leader Patrick Brown that has led to its resignation from his position in the party. Consequently, this led to former Toronto city councillor Doug Ford's election as the new leader of the PC party in March 2018. Additionally, the first leaders debate was held by Ontario's black community with Premier Kathleen Wynne of the Ontario Liberals, Andrea Horwath of the NDP, and Mike Schreiner of the Green Party in attendance, except for Doug Ford. According to CBC's poll tracker, as of April 20, 2018, support for the PC Party has 43.0%, Ontario Liberals at 26.6%, and the NDP at 23.3%, the Greens at 5.4%, and a category for other parties at 1.7%.

While this may give some sense of which party will form Ontario's next government, it should not dissuade getting out and voting. Polls have been wrong before when it comes to the actual poll that matters, Election Day. Just look at the 2016 election in the United States at you'll see my point. No, what Ontario needs is greater levels of participation from voters as there are several issues that affect their wellbeing and across a great province like Ontario. Modern democracy rests on this idea of free and fair elections. In the previous 2014 and 2011, Ontario voter turnout were very low, at 52% and 51%. This dismal result can change by get-



ting yourself registered to vote through the Elections Ontario website and convincing your family, friends, neighbours, co-workers and to do the same in pushing for a collective democratic consciousness.

As you exercise this precious voting right, ensure that is an informed one by taking the time to research and compare the many policy platforms released by parties beyond the ones listed here. At the same time, it is imperative that you be wary of the information circulating in the campaign period that may seem and disingenuous and improperly influence your voting decision.

There was also a panel discussion on The Agenda with Steve Paikin about stimulating voter engagement especially with young people with this upcoming election, offering valuable tips and advice that all voters should check out. A piece of advice that struck me was that we should not only treat voting as a civic duty but a tool for social gathering amongst your peers. Have barbecues and others sorts of events to celebrate that Ontario vote. Whether you're a postsecondary student like myself or a senior, we equally have a stake in this election, and one can immediately discover that as they participate in the electoral process.

Contributed by Harrish Thirukumaran

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## Canada Historic Milestones: MAY

May 14, 1969

Homosexuality is decriminalized in Canada, with the passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1968-1969). This omnibus bill was first introduced in December 1967 by Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Minister of Justice. The bill went through two revisions, C-195 and C-150, before finally passing third reading with a vote of 149 to 55.

This massive amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada included amendments to the law on abortion, lotteries and gun possession, and added new offences like impaired driving and cruelty to animals.



“You too, my mother, read my rhymes  
 For love of unforgotten times,  
 And you may chance to hear once more  
 The little feet along the floor”

**Robert Louis Stevenson**  
 (1850 - 1894) Scottish poet

**Monsoon Journal Wishes  
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 a Happy Mother's Day**

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# Thulasi Muttulingam in Toronto...

Contd. from page 1

She has traveled to, lived in, and worked in many parts of South Asia, including Sri Lanka, India and the Maldives. Living in conflict zones, escaping from conflict zones, and returning to work for redevelopment, reconciliation and peace in conflict zones are

all part of her repertoire.

Her work is concentrated on understanding how partisan media divide communities - and thus working as an independent journalist to bridge that gap via ethical reporting and storytelling.

Understanding that mainstream

media alone no longer reach the masses, she uses social media effectively too.

She has several followers on facebook where she founded the page Humans of Northern Sri Lanka (modeled on Humans of New York), to bridge the gap between the conflicted communities within her country - and without.

In conflict zones, narratives are often hijacked. Her work is dedicated to giving the voice back to the voiceless; the suppressed, the oppressed, the not-often heard voices, and the never-before heard voices. They speak. She reports.



Thulasi Muttulingam during a visit in Singapore



Thulasi at The Guardian Newspaper office in London, England

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# Memorial held for victims of accused serial killer Bruce McArthur



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- CARL



**David Poopalapillai**  
- CTC



**Gary Anadasangaree**  
MP



**Haran Vijayanathan**  
- ASSAP



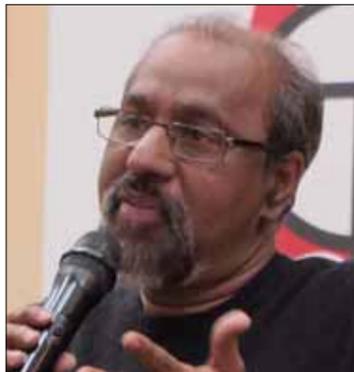
**Moy Wong Tam**  
- OCASI



**Mulgeta Abai**  
- CCR



**Piragal Thiru**



**Prof. R. Cheran**



**Rajkumar Gunaratnam**  
- AI Statement



**Ram Selvarajah**  
- TWN



Memorial for Bruce McArthur Victims

The Members of the Tamil Canadian community gathered in Scarborough on April, 26th 2018, to remember the victims allegedly killed by Bruce McArthur. Two of the victims, SkandaNavaratnam and Kirushnakumar-Kanagaratnam were Tamils who fled the war in Sri Lanka to seek refuge in Canada.

Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) hosted the memorial with the support of Alliance of South Asians for AIDS

Prevention (ASAAP), Amnesty International Canada (AI), Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCA-SI), Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers (CARL) and Tamil Worker's Network. Family members and friends of some of the victims also participated at the memorial.

The speakers representing the many organizations expressed their deepest condolences to the family members and

friends of the victims and the LGBTQ+ community during these difficult times. They also pointed out the failure of the government and other institutions established to safeguard these victims and the failure of the refugee system.

A letter written by the parents of KirshnakumarKanagaratnam, who had arrived on MV Sun Sea in 2010, addressed to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was read at the memorial. In the letter Krishnakumar's parent's, ap-

pealed for justice for the killing of their son. They also sought Prime Minister's help in obtaining the remains of their son delivered to them so they could perform his funeral final rites according to their religious customs. Canadian Tamil Congress urges Canadian government and the relevant authorities to help with their request, so the elderly parents of this victim can have a closure on the death of their beloved son.

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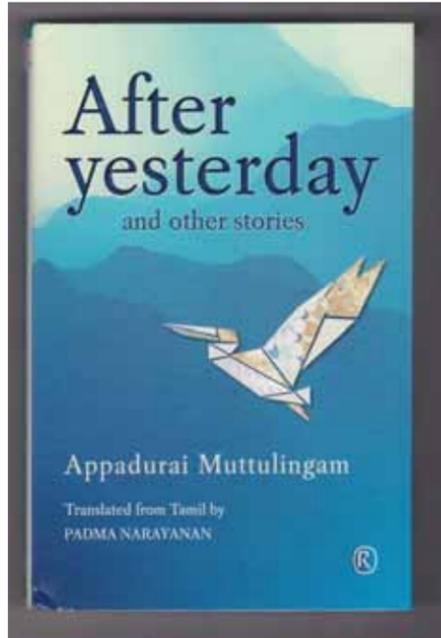
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**Book Review**

# After Yesterday And Other Stories

Author: Appadurai Muttulingam  
Translated by: Padma Narayanan  
Reviewed by: Siva Sivapragasam



“After Yesterday” is a collection of short-stories written originally in Tamil by well-known Tamil short story writer A.Muttulingam and translated into English by Padma Narayanan.

Author Muttulingam’s “After Yesterday” and other stories in this book are based on the lives of immigrants-due to displacements and based on the consequences of the aftermath of the civil war in Sri Lanka.In his stories, the author brings out the true character of a story-teller to keep the reader realize the trauma that arises for people who flee from a war’s ravages. The stories gives us a look into the political, economic and social hardships that people face due to a civil war.The stories in the book are both serious and funny at times.

Author Muttulingam has cleverly crafted the stories to draw on the emotion of the readers and makes them poignant and lucid. The stories in the book obviously reflect the qualities so characteristic of the author’s stories in the Tamil language.Some of the stories also depict humour at times.

Some comments on the Book:  
“The scars of war are evident on the soul of this very fine writer,as they are on the stories. In fact, this collection could be passed off as focusing on the plight of immigrants, wherever they come from” – KekiN.Daruwalla, Poet

and short story writer  
“The author’s voice is that of a true story teller in the classic sense:insightful,tragic and yet so funny-and quite hilarious at times: - Ani ruddhanVasudevan,Writer,Translator  
“The stories in this collection have the qualities so characteristic of AppaduraiMuttulingam’s writing – they are atmospheric yet lucid,specific yet timeless,and they are all built around the sad and tender idea that no matter how much we,as people,tribes or nations,yearn for grand reconciliations, the most we are granted are brief moments of beauty and peace.” – Madhuri Vijay,Writer  
“After Yesterday” is published by Ratna Books and available for purchase through the Publisher or Amazon Bookstore.

## Statement from Ontario PC Leader Doug Ford on South Asian Heritage Month

May 01, 2018 - “I am pleased to celebrate the start of South Asian Heritage Month.

“South Asian Heritage Month celebrates the arrival of settlers from a diverse set of backgrounds and cultures, a diaspora ranging from India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and other nations.

“South Asian Heritage month is a time to pay tribute, recognize and celebrate the contributions of South Asian immigrants in local communities all across this province.

With a community in Ontario of over 1,150,000 people, and a history in Ontario of over 100 years, the South Asian community has played a very significant role in our province’s traditions. Whether in social, economic or political circles, the South Asian diaspora is an important fabric of this province.

“During this month I encourage all Ontarians to learn more about our



friends from the South Asian diaspora. The Ontario PC Party embraces a pluralistic society, one that values faith, family, hard work and respect for traditions.

“On behalf of the Ontario PC Party, I would like to wish all those of South Asian descent a happy South Asian Heritage Month.”

- ontariopc.ca

## Premier Wynne Releases Platform Commitment, Stands Up for Farmland and Green Spaces

May 02: Premier Kathleen Wynne was at the Humber River in Toronto today to highlight how vital Ontario’s Greenbelt is to the millions of people who live in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and announce that the forthcoming Ontario Liberal Party platform will commit a re-elected Liberal government to expanding the Greenbelt.

The Ontario Liberals created the Greenbelt to preserve the integrity of our water systems and our farm land. It’s the largest permanently protected Greenbelt of its kind in the world — a promise to this generation and the next that Ontario will be a province with fresh air, clean water, healthy local food, active outdoor recreation and a thriving economy.

Last year, Premier Wynne’s government launched a consultation on ex-



panding the Greenbelt. Today, the Premier revealed that the Ontario Liberal election platform commits to continuing to grow the Greenbelt.

- ontarioliberal.ca

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BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

# HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA

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

Thulasi Muttulingam is a journalist based in the North of Sri Lanka. Having grown up away from her hometown of Jaffna, it is currently her mission to research and document as much of her culture and heritage as she can. If you are similarly interested, check out more of her work at the facebook page ~ Humans of Northern Sri Lanka: To follow the updates, "Like" the page at:

[www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka)

## Stories behind the phenomenon of migration in post-war Sri Lanka North

### Exploring the issues surrounding labour migration from Sri Lanka, particularly the north:

Here are the personal life stories behind the phenomenon. The people living in the post-war north, who feel impelled to migrate for socio-economic reasons.

#### SELVARAJA KRISHNAKUMAR (30)

He is the sole breadwinner. He went five years ago to Qatar where he does construction work, and remits Rs. 30,000 per month to the family. He returned only once for his mother's funeral, in that time. He is the younger son with an elder brother and two sisters.

He supported the elder brother through university, telling him: "Please study, don't turn out to be like me." The brother graduated from the Jaffna Arts Faculty two years ago and has been unemployed since.

The younger brother's earnings contributed to the elder sister's dowry for her marriage and he is now earning for the younger sister as well. Once she is settled in marriage, he has indicated that he would like to come back and work as a wage labourer in Jaffna in the construction industry – for which he can earn Rs. 1,500 per day. As wage labour back home is sporadic and undependable however, his family is concerned.

The elderly father who was a wage labourer too says he would prefer for the son to stay on there even though he clearly doesn't want to. "When I was a wage labourer, we couldn't plan for the family's needs. You never knew when the money was coming in. Now my son has a salaried job. He ought not to give that up."

#### NADARAJA SIVAKUMAR (25)

He is working as a plumber in Qatar and remits Rs. 30,000 a month. His father works as a mason in Jaffna and earns about the same amount. According to his mother, however, it's a good thing her son is abroad, as people would not respect him back here for doing that kind of labour work.

The fact he is abroad gives them status, even though people know he is doing similar work there she says. "People appreciate young men being abroad and remitting money. If he does the same work here, he'd be called an uneducated labourer. That's just the way it is. I am glad he is abroad in a Muslim country for a different reason. We can't trust our youths not to turn to alcohol



Like



ism or drugs here. He can't access it over there, so he will be under control."

The family of seven, including four other children still schooling, has seen a major change in their socio-economic situation too. They recently bought a plot of land and are in the process of building a house.

Says the mother, "We were once landless and houseless. We lived in makeshift cottages on others' lands all our lives, as we continually displaced through the war. We couldn't have taken loans to buy the land and build this house on my husband's sporadic income, but managed to do so with our son's stable income."

#### EHANATHAN RAJAN (39)

He paid Rs. 120,000 to go to Doha through people he knew working there already, not agents. Once there, he was sub-

contracted out to a variety of different jobs and not paid for months – so he returned after a year and a half. He had to pay off the debts taken to go Doha from back here, as a wage labourer.

As the sole breadwinner and father of five children, he finds it extremely hard to support his family on his current sporadic income and plans to migrate again. "I tried to cut down on agents' fees by going through people I knew. That didn't work out. Next time, I'll pay more to the agent to get me a solid job."

#### VIDHYA GANGATHARAN (36)

She fled domestic abuse at home from an alcoholic husband and 'disappeared' for a while, leaving two children in the care of her sister. She said her employers were kind, good people but the circumstances

she described don't corroborate. "I worked for a family of 10, in Saudi Arabia. They treated me well, but they wouldn't pay me monthly. Initially they paid every two to three months, then said they'd pay it as a lump sum when my contract ended. They also paid me only 600 Riyal (1 Saudi Riyal is approx Rs. 41) while the going rate for most Sri Lankan maids is 1,000 Riyal, citing my inexperience. It was my first job.

"I didn't have time to sleep properly. For the five years I worked there, I slept only 1.5 hours a day. The store room they told me to sleep in was too hot – so I slept on the balcony. I had to look after six children including a baby, as well as cooking and cleaning. The madam would not let me rest for a minute. The house had eight rooms and four bathrooms that she made me clean several times a day.

"A year after I left, my mother passed away. They refused to let me come back for her funeral. They said it was illegal for me to return before my visa expired. The next year, my phone broke down and they didn't replace it. My family could not contact me for the next two years. I couldn't write to them either as I am illiterate. When I finally came home, they gave me my accumulated salary as a lump sum as promised. I was so happy. When I got here however, an educated relative did the math and told me I had been cheated of three years' worth of salary."

#### KOMALA DEVI\* (46)

She is currently in Saudi Arabia though not in direct contact with the family back home. She has indicated she might be in an abusive employment in a letter home some years ago. Her three children are being looked after by her 77-year-old mother-in-law, who roasts and sells peanuts for a living.

In the words of her mother-in-law: "My daughter in law was naïve. She borrowed a gold necklace and bangles for a friend to wear to a wedding, from another friend of hers. The woman she gave the jewellery to pawned it off instead. My daughter-in-law was caught in the middle between two families threatening her, those who gave the jewellery as well as those who took it.

"It caused a scandal in our neighbourhood which affected us all. My daughter-in-law was ostracised as a cheat, with both families spreading rumours about her. She went to the family she had given the jewellery to, begging for it back and got beaten up by them one day. Unable to bear the humiliation she ran away. My son was a fisherman. He couldn't bear the rumours of his wife being an unchaste woman as well as a

cheat who had abandoned her family, and committed suicide. I am looking after my three grandchildren now. All I want is my daughter in law to come back so that I can die in peace.

"She sent a letter some years ago, saying she was in Saudi Arabia without access to a phone and working under very difficult conditions, without regular pay. She said she needed to earn to pay off that lost jewellery and would not return until then."

#### NALAINI KANDASAMY (28)

She first left to Saudi Arabia as a 16-year-old in 2005. Most of her family had escaped the war to refugee camps in India, but her mother, herself and a younger brother stayed back as the brother was sickly.

They were living in Vavuniya where the LTTE were conscripting one child per family and the brother was too sickly, so she was targeted. The mother got an agent to forge documents increasing her age, and sent her to Saudi Arabia. She worked for some years there, fell in love with an Indian restaurant worker, got pregnant and had to return. The child is above five years of age now, so she plans to leave her in the care of her mother and take up employment in the Gulf again.

She says it has been a hard few years trying to survive in the meantime as she couldn't get a stable job back here. The last job she tried was at a garment factory where she was told she looked overweight and thus unlikely to be fit enough to stand sewing at the sewing machines eight hours or more.

#### SUBADRA NAFIZ (34)

She has worked twice in Saudi, returned for a year, and is now heading out to Kuwait again. "I left when I was 17 the first time. I had to work hard round the clock looking after an extended family in a house spanning five storeys and managed to sleep only two hours a day.

"Other than for the hard work and the lack of sleep, there was no problem with the employment. I sent all the money I earned to my mother, and she used it all up so I had no savings when I returned. She's my adopted mother with other children of her own, I am a war orphan. Then I married here and my husband didn't have a regular income either so I left again to Saudi Arabia. He used my remittances to drink and married another woman without telling me. So I again returned home to nothing. I have to go again to earn.

"There are no opportunities for women to earn here. I have stayed and tried; insurance, leasing, marketing – those are the office work

available here and I tried them all. They pay exploitative rates and our take home pay is cut often. Despite the exploitation abroad, at least I will manage to save something."

#### DARSHIKA NADARAJA (24)

She's the second daughter of nine children. Her father was a farmer who developed chronic Kidney Disease and has been bedridden for five years now. So she went to Dubai as a domestic worker while the eldest sister got a job at a garment factory. The other children are still in school, with the youngest only nine years old.

She found work hard in Dubai and was able to remit only Rs. 15,000 which was what her sister was earning back home as well. She came home to try working at the garment factory too, but soon dropped out.

"We have to stand all day sewing, on a dusty factory floor and the dust would scrape our face and eyes. I couldn't take it after a while. My salary as a domestic worker was low because that was my first job. I am going to go to Kuwait now where the agent has said I'd be paid more than Rs. 30,000 as an experienced worker."

#### SULOJANA VARATHAN (45)

She has worked in Saudi twice over the last four years, and is scheduled to leave for Kuwait next. Of her four children, two died/disappeared in war which she is still traumatised by.

"My elder son died in a LTTE claymore attack in 2006, and my younger son disappeared after being arrested for it 30 days later. After the claymore attack, in which my son and three other villagers died, the Army surrounded our village and got down a thalayatti (informant in a hood, who would indicate potential LTTE cadres with a nod of the head). My second son aged 17 had just returned from his A/Level exams. We were still in shock about the elder son's death soon after which my mother died of grief too. The thalayatti nodded at my younger son and they dragged him away in a truck, kicking and screaming. At the Army camp, they denied taking him, I have been running from pillar to post trying to find him ever since."

She broke down crying as she recalled this. Her husband, a carpenter descended into alcoholism after the loss of his sons, so she became the breadwinner and had to go earn abroad. Lack of sleep, too much work and not being paid regularly are complaints she had too. She is leaving for Kuwait next, where she hopes conditions will be better.



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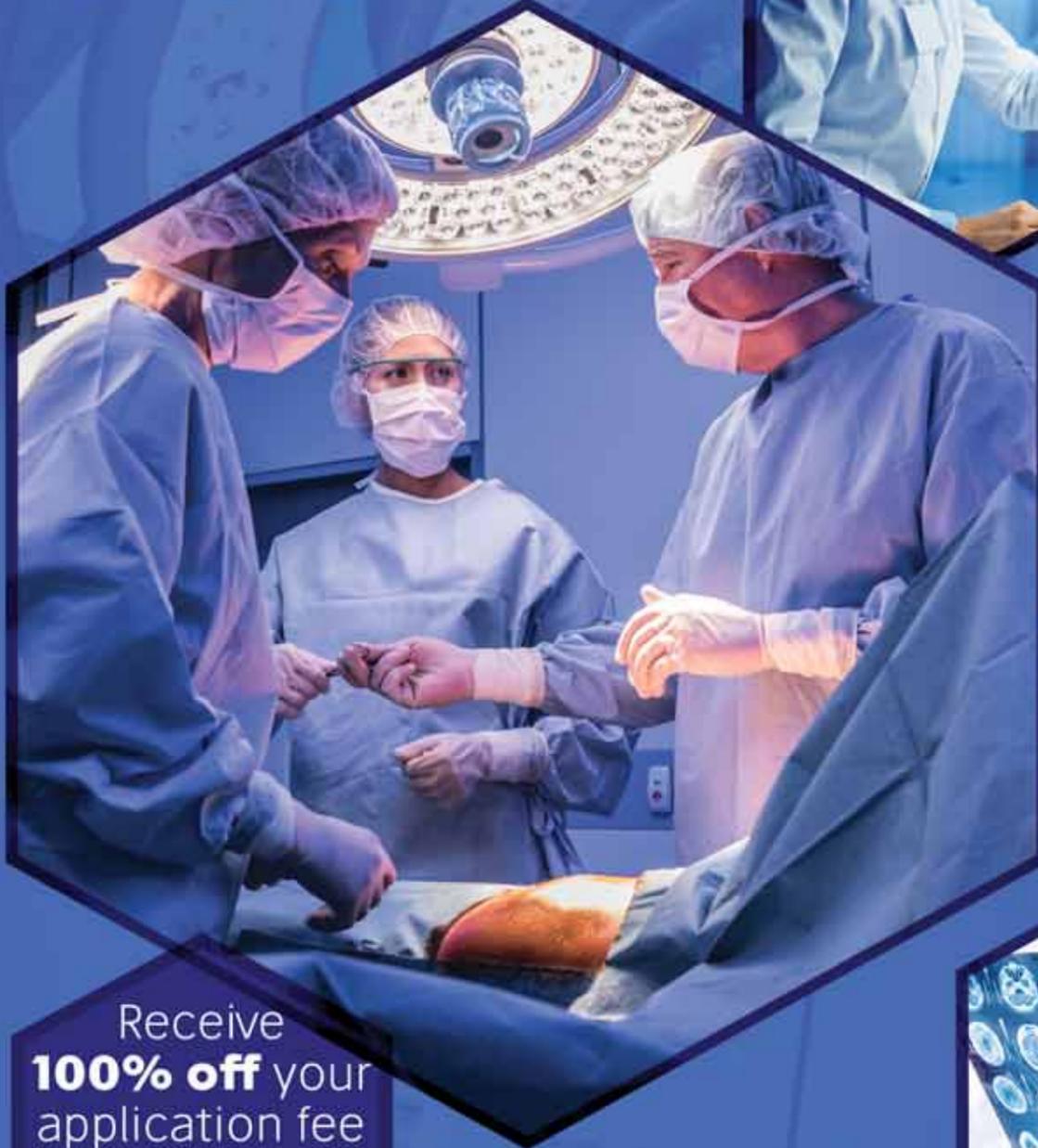
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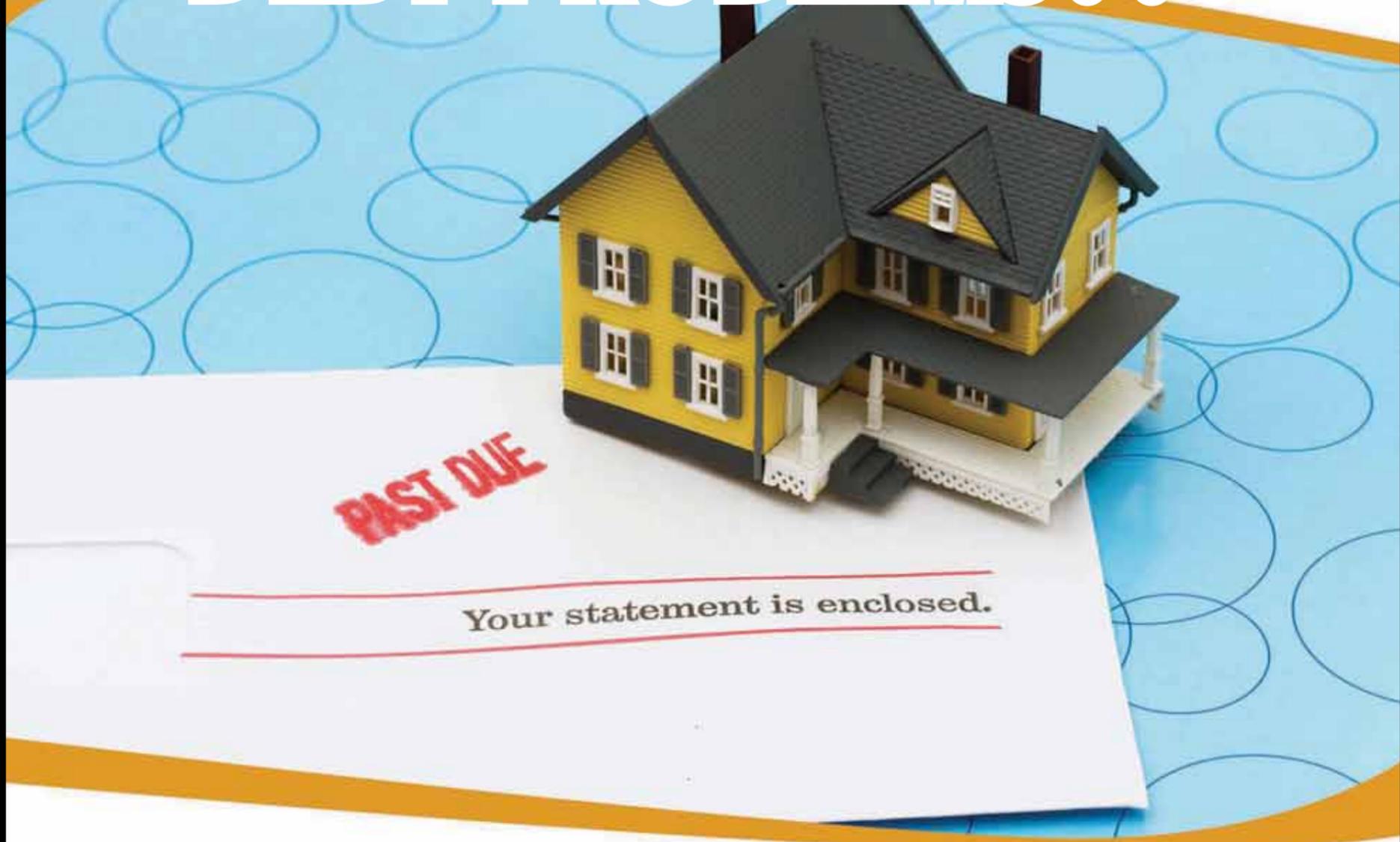
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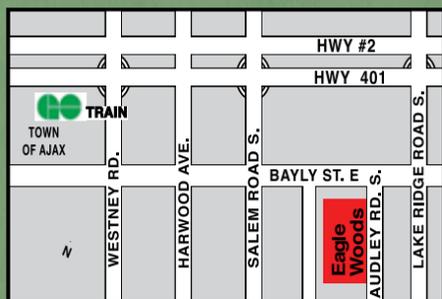
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## Projects will Increase Patient Comfort and Quality of Life



Left to right: Nazanin Khodadoust, Jennifer Reid and Sasha Miles – all WIPP donors.

Providence Healthcare Foundation held its annual “Women in Philanthropy for Providence” (WIPP) voting meeting on April 12, 2018. This is the meeting when Providence Healthcare employees pitch their ideas to WIPP donors for innovative projects they are hoping to fund over the next year. WIPP raises money to fund projects that will cost \$100,000 – usually one \$100,000 project per year, however this is a special year because enough money was raised to fund two projects!

The women reviewed five \$100,000- proposals and selected two projects to fund that will improve patient comfort and quality of life at Providence Healthcare:

1. Renovations that will improve quality of life for the residents and families of our long-term care home – the Cardinal Ambrozic Houses of Providence (Sumac and Juniper Houses)
2. Purchase of therapeutic surfaces that will prevent pressure injuries, primarily for patients receiving palliative care at Providence.

“The women of WIPP look forward to the voting meeting every year,” says WIPP Chair Anny Nasser. “Knowing patients will be a little more comfortable and stimulated because of our donations makes us so proud and I’m thankful for every WIPP member’s participation. I wish we could have funded all five of the proposals.”

Gourmade Thyme Catering provided a South African-inspired dinner for the voting meeting. Its founder and chef, Marie Brennan, is a long-time friend of Providence and a WIPP donor.

RBC sponsored the meeting. RBC has been a Gold Sponsor of WIPP supports Providence in numerous ways with its social responsibility mission of providing a better “someday” for our community.

Here is a sneak peek at the two projects that will happen as a result of this year’s generous \$200,000 grant to Providence.

### 1. Long-Term Care Home Revitalization

Approximately 85 per cent of residents in the Houses of Providence have some form of dementia. Many residents benefit from having space to spread out. Several small renovations will provide more space for wandering, easier access to the garden for replenishment and exercise, and better opportunities for staff supervision, vis-

ibility and resident engagement. In addition, several murals and interchangeable art work will be installed to create a friendlier and more interesting environment. Research shows that familiar scenes and art help to increase stimulation, while reducing anger, anxiety and depression. One concept is to camouflage double doors with a mural that will look like a large piece of furniture. This creates a more home-like environment and relieves some residents of the frustration and anxiety they can experience when they see a door they cannot pass through.

In the words of one family member who wants the renovations for the benefits they will bring to the patients: “Beauty touches the human spirit and brings healing. The proposed changes would bring comfort, contentment and peace to them.”

### 2. Therapeutic Surfaces and “Heel Managers™”

Pressure injuries arise from the constant pressure of lying or sitting in one position and being too weak or unwell to move independently. This project will fund 36 therapeutic surfaces and 40 heel rests to treat existing sores and prevent new damage – primarily for patients in long-term and palliative care. Nurses reposition staff repeatedly throughout the day and night, but these therapeutic surfaces will do an even better job. Think of all the small movements you make while you are sleeping – the wriggle

needed because of a wrinkled sheet, the slight shift of a hip – these are often beyond a patient’s ability. Imagine what it would feel like to hurt and be unable to adjust yourself. These therapeutic surfaces make tiny adjustments in air-filled cells to reduce skin compression, helping with pain and pressure reduction and increasing comfort.

### About WIPP

Women in Philanthropy for Providence (WIPP) is a group of women who each donate \$1,000 per year (\$500 for women under 35). The women are invited to attend four events per year, and an annual voting meeting to determine how their donations will be used to drive positive change at Providence. With close to 120 women in the group, the projects it chooses to fund typically cost \$100,000 each.

To join WIPP or learn more about it, check out [www.wippto.com](http://www.wippto.com) or contact Cassidy Walker-Sloan at [cwalker-sloan@providence.on.ca](mailto:cwalker-sloan@providence.on.ca) or 416-285-3666, ext.3990. The next WIPP event is an Inspirational Evening with keynote speaker Michelle Dubé of CTV News on June 14th.

### About Providence

Providence Healthcare provides rehabilitation, palliative care, long-term care, and community programs. To learn more about Providence Healthcare Foundation, visit [www.providence.on.ca/foundation](http://www.providence.on.ca/foundation).



Left to right: Susan Chandler, Pat Colucci and Shelley Allen. Susan and Shelley are Providence Healthcare staff members who “pitched” the two winning projects to the WIPP donors

## AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION PUBLISHES RESEARCH ON SRH'S REGIONAL CARDIOVASCULAR REHAB SERVICE

New research on the success of Scarborough and Rouge Hospital's (SRH) regional cardiovascular rehabilitation service was shared internationally at the American Heart Association's QCOR 2018 Conference in Washington, DC., held April 6 to 7.

A research collaborative led by SRH cardiologist Dr. Joe Ricci, who is the medical manager for the service, was accepted to present three abstracts at the conference. These oral and poster presentations highlighted findings from an Applied Health Outcomes Related Quality (AHRQ) study and shed new light on the merits of our cardiovascular rehab program, which is unique in North America as a regionally-managed, community-based service.

"We are pleased to be able to share the achievements of our highly successful regional program with the American Heart Association," said Dr. Ricci. "Our community-based system of care is not only improving population health, it is also doing it in way that is cost-effective and that can be modeled by other jurisdictions and health-care providers. It is a privilege to have findings on our clinical activity published at a meeting of this significance.

The AHRQ study was designed to better understand the impact of patients participating in SRH's rehab program, which is funded by the Central East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and is currently offered at 14 community sites throughout the region. In addition to the Central East LHIN, the service is

also delivered collaboratively with local partner hospitals, municipalities, and community centres. In 2017-18, more than 3,700 patients participated in the program, making it the largest cardiovascular rehabilitation service in Canada.

The study was conducted over a period of 18 months and followed more than 11,000 patients who were referred to the program. Data from the study showed overwhelmingly the program is helping to improve health for cardiovascular patients and break down barriers to access. Key observations include:

1. The mortality rates for patients who completed the program was just 0.7 per cent, compared to 11.8 per cent for patients who did not start the program.

2. Over the 18 months, only 9.7 per cent of patients who completed the program were admitted to the hospital, and only 3.3 per cent had to visit the emergency department for a cardiac reason. This is statistically lower than the rates for a comparison Central East LHIN group at 14.4 per cent and 4.2 per cent, respectively.

3. More than 50 per cent of patients referred to the program enrolled, which is higher than the 20 per cent enrolment rate for cardiovascular rehab across Canada and 22 per cent rate in Ontario. For those enrolled, 67 per cent completed the program.

The American Heart Association QCOR conference marks the first time that findings from the study are being published. Abstracts for oral and poster presentations were also



accepted to be shared at the XVII International Symposium on Atherosclerosis being held in Toronto in June 2018. Dr. Ricci and the research collaborative members look forward to additional opportunities to present on the study in the coming year.

More about SRH's regional cardiovascular rehabilitation service

The Central East Regional Cardiovascular Rehabilitation Service is a six-month exercise and education program that helps participants to get on track to a heart healthy lifestyle. This service is specially designed for community members with a vascular disease, or who are at high risk for a vascular condition — with risk

factors such as a history of smoking, diabetes, high-blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, and an inactive lifestyle.

Thanks to ongoing funding and investment by the Central East LHIN, the regional service has expanded to 14 community and hospital-based sites in Scarborough, Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, Bowmanville, Cobourg, Port Perry, Lindsay, Peterborough, Bobcaygeon, and Campbellford — closer to where patients live and work. All participants are within 30-minutes travel distance of one of these facilities.

## WITH KNOWLEDGE COMES PEACE



Patient Katarina Nemcova (second from right) joins Scarborough and Rouge Hospital staff and physicians, and the PKD Foundation of Canada, for the launch of the hospital's new Polycystic Kidney Disease Clinic on April 4.

Katarina Nemcova is a self-employed registered massage therapist who lives in Toronto and loves to travel south to swim in the ocean.

Katarina also has polycystic kidney disease (PKD), which causes progressive cysts on the kidneys, enlarging them slowly, and leading patients to need dialysis until they must have their kidneys removed and undergo a transplant surgery.

At 50 years old, Katarina has been coping with and researching PKD for most of her life. She has been a patient of Dr. Janet Roscoe, a nephrologist at Scarborough and Rouge Hospital (SRH), for close to 25 years.

There is usually a family

history of PKD, something Katarina knows all too well. She lost her grandmother to the disease at age 62. And her mother passed away at age 54 while still in the hospital after receiving her second kidney transplant.

"I made a lot of life choices based on the fact that I have PKD, knowing sooner or later I will have to deal with it," said Katarina. "I chose not to have children because I'm here by myself in this country, and I worried about who would look after my kids if I need to be on dialysis."

Roughly 10 per cent of Scarborough residents are living with PKD, one of the most com-

mon life-threatening genetic diseases. But now, patients in Scarborough and beyond have greater access to diagnosis and additional treatment options in the management of PKD with the official opening of SRH's new PKD clinic on April 4. The new clinic will run biweekly on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon at the Multi-Care Kidney Clinic, First floor, East Wing, General site.

SRH has partnered with Otsuka Canada Pharmaceutical Inc., manufacturer of JINARC (tolvaptan), the first treatment indicated to slow the progression of kidney enlargement in PKD. Patients who meet the conditions for treatment with JINARC, and who only have partial private health insurance coverage or none at all, can apply to the ORIJIN Patient Support Program sponsored by Otsuka, which offers financial assistance and compassionate access programs.

"I feel very fortunate to be a part of the program, and I wish I had JINARC 20 years ago," said Katarina. "Before I started taking the medication, I felt nauseous every morning. But not anymore."

"Before, there was a lot of pressure on my lungs when I exercised. I love the elliptical machine but I do six or seven minutes and my heartbeat is in the red zone because the kidneys are not pumping sufficiently. As soon as I started

taking JINARC I felt like my breathing was easier."

Along with the treatment, a key component to success with the PKD Clinic is SRH's inter-professional team of experts. Research shows that early screening and management, which involves many health care providers including nephrologists, nurses, dietitians, social workers, and pharmacists, have led to positive patient outcomes and improved self-management of the disease.

For Katarina, whose kidneys are each three litres ("like the size of two little babies"), interaction with the interprofessional team is perhaps one of the most helpful aspects of the program. (For context, healthy kidneys are about the size of a mouse.) Katarina has a thirst for information related to improving her self-management of PKD.

"Speaking with a dietitian through this program was an eye opener. I thought I was eating healthy; whole wheat bread, snacking on cherry tomatoes and pickles, not candy. But I learned I should be eating white bread, and there are even limits with fruits and vegetables. The kidney cannot process some of the healthy stuff the body needs."

She also finds peace of mind after every meeting with Janice Javier, staff nurse with SRH's nephrology team. Janice takes the time to patiently explain what is happening with her

PKD so Katarina always knows where she stands, and finds that it is empowering.

Katarina has been on the program for about two years, and credits it with helping her to delay the need for dialysis a few years more.

"My kidney function could still be better but it is nice that my kidneys are shrinking, which is what the treatment does. The monthly bloodwork is a very small price to pay and I'm grateful to know what is happening with my kidney function each month."

Her advice to other patients living with PKD?

"Maintain a good relationship with your nephrologist, get on a program like this, and get more information from the right resources. Watch your sodium and sugar. And, I've found that swimming in the ocean has done wonders. I can swim for hours a day. It lifts the kidneys and you don't worry about the pressure and the weight."

Katarina knows there is no cure for PKD, but she is encouraged by the recent advancements made in the field. She is optimistic that someday she is going to beat this disease.

"One day I will be living with a bionic kidney! Maybe not for a few more years, but to know they are working on such advancements helps you feel there is a light at the end of the tunnel. For now, I choose to make the best of my life!"

# SRH receives \$51,000 energy efficiency rebate from Toronto Hydro



Scarborough and Rouge Hospital (SRH) has received a rebate from Toronto Hydro of \$51,000 for the hospital's work to improve energy efficiency at its General site.

"We're grateful to Toronto Hydro for recognizing our hospital's commitment to sustainably reduce our electricity consumption," said Rick Gowrie, Vice President, Capital Planning and Facilities Operations at SRH.

Since 2016, SRH has partnered with Toronto Hydro to assess opportunities for energy savings. As a result of this collaboration, 35 Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) were installed at the General site on strategic air handling systems. Through sensors and software scheduling, the VFDs

are able to vary the air handling system or shut it down completely when there is low or no occupancy in certain areas of the hospital.

"These VFDs have allowed SRH to reduce electricity use at the General site by nearly three Giga-watt hours, representing a 12 per cent drop in the site's overall electricity consumption per year. This amounts to a year-over-year savings of approximately \$400,000 and is the equivalent of removing 65 compact cars off the road every year," said Jana Jedlovska, Key Account Consultant, at Toronto Hydro.

"This is a substantial reduction for the hospital and they should be proud of their work towards energy efficiency and savings."

The project was undertaken with a very small capital investment from SRH of \$80,000. The \$51,000 rebate from Toronto Hydro was used to fund the rest of the initiative.

"In addition to making our community that much healthier, reducing the energy consumption of our sites allows us to redirect funds that would have been used to pay for utilities towards patient care," added Schubert Martin, Manager of Facilities who headed up the project.

"We're looking forward to deploying similar energy efficiency measures at our other sites, while also expanding our focus to reduce the hospital's use of water and gas."

## Scarborough and Rouge Hospital achieves Best Practice Spotlight Organization designation



Scarborough and Rouge Hospital (SRH) has officially achieved Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) designation at its Birchmount and General sites from the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) – the first hospital in the Central East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) to achieve such a designation.

BPSOs are health-care and academic organizations selected by RNAO to implement and evaluate its internationally acclaimed best practice guidelines (BPG). These guidelines incorporate evidence-based practice to enhance patient outcomes.

"Our BPSO designation is a testament to the leadership and hard work of our team, as well as our commitment to the highest standard of excellence in care to all of our patients, from the elderly, to people living with chronic disease, to vulnerable young

families, and more," said Liz Buller, President and CEO of SRH.

"We're exceptionally grateful to the many staff members who helped to support the uptake of RNAO's BPGs and evidence-based practice across the organization as BPSO Champions," added Linda Calhoun, Vice President, Patient Services and Chief Nursing Executive at SRH.

"Using a model to implement practice change, more than 200 of our frontline nurses and nurse leaders, and over 100 allied health staff have been instrumental as champions to ensure that our patients receive the very best care possible as a result of the BPG recommendations."

"We are proud of Scarborough and Rouge Hospital's commitment to evidence-based practice. By supporting nurses and other health professionals to implement RNAO's BPGs, they are optimizing the level of care provided

to patients," says Dr. Doris Grinspun, RNAO's Chief Executive Officer and the founder of the BPG program. "The care needs of patients must always come first and RNAO's BPGs put patients first and result in improved patient, organizational and health system outcomes. Bravo Scarborough and Rouge Hospital."

Throughout its three year candidacy, SRH has implemented eight RNAO BPGs that will positively impact the health and well-being of its patients, including:

### Corporate

- Client Centred Care
- Assessment and Management of Pain

### Clinical/Healthy Workplace

- Developing and Sustaining Interprofessional Health Care
- Caregiving Strategies for Older Adults with Delirium, Dementia

and Depression

- Preventing and Managing Violence in the Workplace
- Strategies to Support Self-Management in Chronic Conditions
- Breastfeeding
- Assessment and Care of Adults at Risk for Suicidal Ideation and Behaviour

"This designation is practice driven; it's meant to help us optimize the role of nurses and promote collaboration among our interprofessional teams," explained Kim Brophy, Director, Quality, Standardization and Infection Control at SRH. "We're excited to continue our BPSO journey by spreading our success to our Centenary site, implementing new BPGs, and sustaining the practice changes at our Birchmount and General sites."

For more information on BPSOs, please visit <http://rnao.ca/bpg/bpsos>.

# Sri Lankan among victims in Toronto terror attack

A Sri Lankan woman is among the ten victims killed in the deadly van attack in Toronto.

by Raymond Rajabalan

Renuka Amarasinghe, 48 years old from Horana, had been living in Toronto for over a decade as a single mother to her seven-year-old son when a white van plowed into pedestrians on Toronto's Yonge Street, a main commercial thoroughfare.

She had just finished her first shift at nearby Earl Haig Secondary School and was walking when she was struck.

Among Amarasinghe and nine others who were killed, 14 people remain in the hospital with injuries.

Amarasinghe had been regularly involved with the Toronto Mahavihara Buddhist Centre for the past 15 years, said its Chief Priest Ven. Ahangama Rathanasiri Thero. The Thero said the bodies of the deceased have yet to be released, as not all have been identified yet, but that Amarasinghe's final rites will be held in Canada where she is a citizen and where her son still resides. He added that the temple will do all it can for Amarasinghe's child and his future.

Renuka Amarasinghe was a single mother and long-time member of the Toronto Mahavihara Buddhist Meditation Centre in Scarborough. Ahangama Rathanasiri Thero, president and chief monk at the temple, said she came regularly for religious ceremonies and brought her young son to Sunday school. The last time he saw Amarasinghe was one day before she died, at a Sunday Sri Lankan New Year celebration at the temple. "She (was) a very kind and generous lady. She devoted her time for the child," Thero said. "She made the effort to raise that child in a good manner."

Representatives from the temple met on Tuesday (April 24) to co-ordinate more fundraising efforts for her son, and are planning her funeral, he said. They will be unable to repatriate her body back to Sri Lanka, where she has a mother, sister, and brother, he said, adding he expects family members may come to visit instead.

Right now, her son is with staying with family friends at the home where Amarasinghe rented the basement apartment. "Friends are very helpful to her because she's good, she's kind," he said. "They are very concerned about the child." The Lotus Youth Council at the temple is organizing a Go FundMe fundraiser for her 7-year-old son, Dion. Her sister, Pushpakanthie Amar-

asinghe said Renuka had recently visited Sri Lanka and hoped to get dual citizenship as well. She said her sister had met with this accident when she was on her way to work after dropping her son to school.

Condolences also poured out from Amarasinghe's employer, the Toronto District School Board, where she was a former adult student and later became a Nutrition Services staff member as of 2015. She worked her first day at Earl Haig Secondary School, said Director of Education John Malloy in a statement. "We are reaching out to her loved ones to support them in any way possible."

"On behalf of Trustees, we extend our sincere condolences to Renuka's family and friends. This is a difficult time for the students and staff that knew her and we will continue to provide support to them in the days and weeks ahead," said chair Robin Pilkey in a statement.

The suspect in the attack, Alek Minassian, was charged on Tuesday with ten counts of first-degree murder and 13 counts of attempted murder. Minassian joined Canada's armed forces last year but was released after just sixteen days on his own request. According to those who know him, Minassian was a "socially awkward" student; but online, he had a propensity to rage in social media posts about women who rejected his romantic advances.

Sources: 680 News, The National Post, The Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, The Daily Mirror (Sri Lanka)



A mourner attending a candle light vigil



A mourner attending a candle light vigil



People bowing Their heads at the Vigil for Yonge St victims



# Toronto van attack: The cop who didn't shoot

by Raymond Rajabalan

There have been a lot of these. London. Munster. Berlin. Barcelona. Paris. Nice. Stockholm. It's hard to recall the details of any one specifically or to tell them apart. There's a van or a car. Often it is rented. The driver steers it into a crowd, killing as many pedestrians as he can. Most end when whoever is behind the wheel is shot or shoots himself.

On Monday 23rd it was Toronto. But I think this one may stand out in our memory for more than the fact that it happened here, in Canada. It will also be remembered as "The one with the cop—the cop who didn't shoot."

The attack on Yonge Street started like all the other recent vehicle rampages. On a sunny spring afternoon, at around 1:30 pm, a white van leapt the curb and careened down the sidewalk with no warning. As always, the early details were vague and confusing. Five hurt. Then eight hurt. Then there was news of fatalities. Ten are dead and 15 injured. News helicopters are showing bodies on the sidewalk, covered by tarps. We can only imagine the beginning, the shock of seeing a van hurtle over the sidewalk, the horrible noise and screams. We don't have to imagine the end, though; most of us have already watched it.

There are at least three videos of the takedown that are circulating on social media and being shown on TV right now. The first begins with the battered van stopped on the sidewalk. A siren is wailing. A police officer is standing 30 ft away, behind his car, his gun drawn and with both arms straight he is pointing it at the van. He is in a half crouch. He is yelling.

What was he thinking at that moment? He knew this was the van that had reportedly just mowed down more than two dozen people. He could see the smashed grill. He could see the man behind the wheel. Did he think it was about to explode? Did he expect the driver to jump out shooting? The cop holds his fire.

Then the van door opens. The driver, dressed all in black, steps out and is pointing what appears to be a gun at the officer. He yells something, but you can't hear it over the siren. The officer stands in the middle of the street. Alone facing a man who is pointing a gun back at him. But the cop doesn't shoot; he reaches into his car and turns off the siren. Now he can hear the driv-



Officer KEN LAM arresting the suspect



Officer Ken Lam with his dad

Amidst the chaos and horror, a Toronto police officer calmly faced down the driver. It's a moment we should remember.

er. The camera then zooms in on the suspect. He is facing the cop, standing square, his arms raised. The gun may not be a gun. It is too hard to tell from where the cameraman is. He steps toward the officer. Then he reaches back fast to his hip pocket, pulls his hand back up again, quick-drawing like a gunslinger.

Suddenly you realize he wants the cop to shoot him. But that is not what is happening. The driver quick-draws a second time. The cop won't fire.

The officer later identified as Ken Lam yelling. "Get down!" He repeats it again. You can hear the driver now, too. "I have a gun in my pocket!" You can almost hear a hint of frustration. But the lone cop still doesn't shoot.

The driver keeps pointing whatever is in his hand at the police offi-

cer who is carefully circling him to his right. "I have a gun in my pocket!" He starts walking towards the cop. A second video shows this precise moment from an office window high above. The driver keeps advancing, his arm extended. The officer steps backward. But doesn't shoot.

Then, in a flash, something shifts. The cop takes a step forward. He moves towards the driver for the first time. The man in black hesitates and then steps backward. His determination evaporates. He doesn't want to die. His hands go up. He throws down the black thing in his hand. The cop keeps coming. He tells him to get down. He doesn't shoot.

"Put your hands behind your back!" He kneels on the driver, who is laying face down now on the sidewalk. He

reaches for his cuffs. Thirty-seven seconds after the driver emerged from his van the attack is over. The cop didn't shoot. I am paid to explain things and sound confident doing so. But I honestly don't know what to make of this terrifying, remarkable moment. A man may have just killed many people. He rushed out of his van, which could have been a bomb. He pointed what looked like a weapon. And yet this police officer did not shoot.

At any point if the cop had fired and killed the suspect, the public, his peers, the press, even the driver himself, everyone would have understood. In fact, we likely would have called him a hero.

What held his finger? Bravery? Training? Compassion? Perhaps we will find out in the days ahead. But whatever it is, it deserves attention.

It is easy to take a life. A quick turn of the steering wheel and 10 people are gone. A small amount of pressure on the trigger, and the suspect is dead. We kill each other out of hate, or fear, or ignorance, or duty. Sadly, we understand this instinct well. This is the dark side of humanity. And rightly, we are mesmerized by the horror of it.

But there is light inside us too. We also possess the instinct to keep each other alive. This part of us can be more difficult to understand. But it deserves our devotion much more than the act of killing does. These moments of humanity are not uncommon, but they are precious.

It would be good if we could remember that about Toronto, remember the cop who didn't shoot.

Source: Maclean's magazine



## WORDS OF PEACE

# Peace Is Fundamental



Peace is fundamental for human beings, says Prem Rawat, an ambassador of peace who has dedicated his life to bringing his message of hope, dignity and prosperity to people around the world.

"The need for peace is not created by a document," Mr. Rawat says. "It is created by a fundamental desire innate to all human beings, regardless of whether they are rich or poor, successful or unsuccessful. It is that innate desire that has, throughout history, pushed us again and again to find peace."

All too often, Mr. Rawat says, peace is defined as the absence of war. We think of war as something that happens between countries, and peace as something that happens to stop that war. Yet wars can take place between two people, and there's also a war that takes place inside just one person. For the war between countries, maybe a ceasefire can be negotiated, he says. For a war between two people, maybe an understanding can be reached—but the

war that rages inside a human being is much more ferocious. It devastates our foundation to the core. How can we put an end to that war?

"Those people who have talked about peace in earnest have said, 'What you are looking for is within you,'" Mr. Rawat says. "You are the source and the resource for peace on the face of this Earth. This is the realization, the understanding, necessary for feeling peace in this life—not being distracted by all our agendas, but accepting and understanding the agenda that comes with the opportunity to be alive."

"It begins with understanding our similarities, not our differences. Right now in this world, we look at what country people are from, what language they speak, what they do. In a survival situation where, let's say, people are on a life raft in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, they're not going to be talking about where they are from. Anything that is not necessary to survival is going to be dropped in favor of what is neces-

sary—to collect water, to stay away from hostile elements, to have food. So in spite of all our differences, our quests are similar."

Peace, Mr. Rawat says, is not a new idea. "The desire for peace, the concept of peace, the idea of peace did not start this year or last year or the year before. It's so fundamental that for as long as people have been on the face of the Earth this is what they have looked forward to. This is what they have wanted. Yet more often than not, that longing for peace has been ignored. There are plenty of precedents for ignoring peace, and it has brought so much misery!"

"The precedent for finding peace has to begin somewhere. It would be sad if another generation were to go by ignoring the very basic and fundamental call within the heart to have peace on this Earth. It cannot continue to be ignored. It is incumbent upon us to have the strength to say, 'Peace today, not tomorrow.' Tomorrow is just an idea. Today is when all tomorrows manifest. In today, find

your reality. In today, find your courage. Today, find the possibility of being in peace, being in joy, being in the reality that you are."

Peace, Mr. Rawat says, must begin within each and every individual. "You are the source. The thirst for peace is within you—and within you is the well in which the sweetest water is found. Within you are both the thirst and the means to quench it. Begin by accepting this possibility in your life. This is where you answer lies."

"I am not telling anyone what to do to be in peace. I am just saying that we have the possibility of making a difference. Whatever it takes, let us have peace. Whatever it takes!"

To learn more about Prem Rawat: 1 877 707 3221

416 431 5000 Tamil

416 264 7700 Hindi

[www.wopg.org](http://www.wopg.org)

[www.tprf.org](http://www.tprf.org)

[www.premrawat.com](http://www.premrawat.com)

[www.timelesstoday.com](http://www.timelesstoday.com)



# Starting Conversations

By: Janani Srikantha

Last week, while editing an essay, a student and I began discussing if a word was considered slang or not. This led to a conversation about the evolution of language, and both of us asked questions, did impromptu research, and learnt more. It was a perfect learning moment, for both of us, and it sprung out of being open to conversation.

Reflecting on this, I have made it a point to ask my students what they are wondering about, and also give them the opportunity to hear about the questions I ponder upon. "What do you think about...?" and "How does...?" have become common phrases in our classes. Children are beginning to question what is around them and what they see or hear. I love this!

A few years ago, on Time magazine's website, Annie Murphy Paul cites research by UCLA that "two-way adult-child conversations were six times as potent in promoting language development as interludes where adults did all the talking. Engaging in this reciprocal back-and-forth gives children a chance to try out language for themselves, and also gives them the sense that their thoughts and opinions matter". The article continues to explain

that children, who experience engaging two-way conversations with adults, grow up to advocate for the issues that interest them. Furthermore, the article refers to multiple research studies that show that parents' interactions and conversations with their children have a much greater influence than any activities, resources, and interactions that are offered by the school.

There are many ways that discussions can begin at home, and there are resources such as Flocabulary's Week in a Rap that can be used as a jumping-off point. Another resource that I find really great is Ted Ed, which uses videos of a shorter duration than those of Ted Talks. This is ideal for children of all ages as they build their attention span. Also, Ted Ed videos are animated which increases the interest-factor for children. The wide variety of topics answer questions such as: What was the rise and fall of the Assyrians? Which of Plato's ideas didn't stand the test of time? Why are fish fish-shaped? Why do "good manners" change over time? Who was the most successful pirate in history (which I watched this morning)?

I love Ted Ed videos because they are short and sweet, as mentioned before, and everybody can learn something new. They are an ideal resource

to use at home for discussions because they make it easy for the adults. Every video comes with Think, Dig Deeper, and Discuss options. This guides you to check for comprehension, provides more resources to investigate together as a family, and suggests questions that can help start a discussion. You can jump straight to the Dig Deeper or Discuss options as you like.

Once parents and children are comfortable finding topics of interest and starting a conversation, there are Ted Ed Clubs where children can share and present their own ideas. Why not start a Ted Ed club in your community or within your neighbourhood? It's the perfect avenue to develop curious, enthusiastic, and passionate children who become leaders in their own lives, community and/or the world.

Ted Ed is educational and develops general knowledge, inspires us to question and wonder about the world around us, and broadens our perspectives to see different opinions and solutions.

It is a free resource that we should take advantage of as an adults and children - as a family. The more we can have discussions where our children's voices and opinions are valued, and they see themselves as part of a two-way conversation where everyone

is learning together, the bigger the impact it will have on them. Learning is not just within the walls of a school, but happens during conversations at the dinner table or snuggled up on the couch at home.

As for me, I have a couple of questions I'm pondering about from this morning's video about Madame Zheng, the most successful pirate in history. It's time to take a moment and see what else I can learn about her, and ask the kids what they think.

Janani Srikantha is a certified teacher who is experienced with the Ontario curriculum and the International Baccalaureate. She provides tutoring using personalized learning plans based on students' needs. She is knowledgeable on integrating technology to



thinkshif.edu

redefine learning that is inclusive of all students. Janani has led workshops for educators and parents on topics that address different facets of education. For more information or queries on how to help your child with learning, please email [info@thinkshif.edu](mailto:info@thinkshif.edu) or visit Thinkshift Edu on Facebook.



## Special Feature

# KACEE RHODES OVERCOME WITH EMOTION ON RETURN TO SRI LANKAN ORPHANAGE SHE WAS ADOPTED FROM

EXCLUSIVE  
SPECIAL  
FEATURE  
ARTICLE

Life is about bringing hope to the hopeless and breathing life into people's lives. If you want the world changed, then understand that change starts with you. Just one small or one large act of generosity can impact lives - *Benjamin Gresham*

By: *Raymond Rajabalan*



With a lump in her throat and salt water starting to well in her eyes, Kacee Rhodes set foot into the Sri Lankan orphanage (Peter Weerasesera children's home, Yakkala) she was adopted from almost 30 years ago.



Kacee Rhodes and fiancé Phil Jegard visits the Orphanage - Some of the children at the orphanage

The enormity of what she was about to experience didn't set in until she was on her way to Sydney airport. Her mind had been pre-occupied by plans for her upcoming wedding and organising her dad's surprise 60th birthday party from a world away in Canada where she now lives.

Kacee hadn't thought about how emotional things might get when she returned to her birth place with her dad Mark and fiancé Phil Jegard.

"Even the days prior to going to the orphanage I had no concept of what I was about to experience," Kacee said. After a surprise visit to Maitland for her dad's birthday, their pair flew from Australia to Sri Lanka, meeting up with Kacee's fiancé.

Kacee had two missions – to see where her life began and to visit the orphanage that saved her life. She had already given the children's home a donation of \$6800, the result of a Go Fund Me page she set up earlier this year. "I asked the orphanage's management if they could direct the funds towards education, health care and nutrition," she said.

Kacee met with the trustees of the orphanage the day before she visited. "They expressed their gratitude for the donation and were very excited I was going to visit the home," she said. "They asked a lot of questions about my life, my family and listened to dad's stories from 30 years ago and provided updates about a child that my dad remembered from his first visit to the orphanage."

Kacee, currently employed as a regis-

tered nurse in Calgary, Canada was also interviewed by representatives from an advertising company who were creating a campaign to help raise awareness about the children's home in the hope of gaining more donations and support.

She was adopted by Rutherford couple Mark and Gail Rhodes from Australia when she was four months old.

For Mark and Gail (who sadly died in 2009), the journey to Sri Lanka in 1988 was a massive risk with the country in the grip of a civil war which lasted 25 years.

Kacee had her education in Australia before she found employment as a registered nurse in Canada. As she grew up Kacee, a former student of St Paul's at Rutherford, St Joseph's Lochinvar and St Mary's in Maitland, vowed she would always return to her birth place.



Gail & Mark Rhodes with Kacee shortly after Kacee was adopted from a Sri Lankan orphanage

"There were no records kept of my birth parents," Kacee said.

"Abandoned isn't a word I like to think of, even if that was the case. As my dad explained, a lot of children that were born around the time I was, whose parents couldn't financially support them, would sell their children to become beggars on the street.

"These children would often have their arms or legs broken in order to gain sympathy from tourists and get money. My birth parents could have easily done that with me, however, I was put into an orphanage. I consider myself one of the lucky ones based on that alone. The fact that I was able to be adopted was an absolute miracle," she said.



Kacee's first stop at the orphanage was to the home's nutrition centre which looked after orphans aged four weeks to three years. "This was the one that broke me," she said.

"We were taken into a room where there were about eight cots, each with the most precious little angels occupying them. My heart broke when I looked into their eyes and wondered how anyone could possibly abandon one of these beautiful little souls. They were all so innocent and perfect.

"Then my heart and soul were completely stolen by a baby girl named Bahhunde. The instant she looked into my eyes with her angelic big brown eyes, gorgeous long lashes and adorable big smile, I was in love, the kind that would move

my heart if I ever found out.

"Then every happy memory I had as a child came flooding back, each one was like taking a bullet because I knew if it wasn't for this home taking me in as a baby and if I was never adopted I wouldn't have those happy memories or the life I live.

"It was clear that the women who worked in the home had nothing but love to give these children which was the only way I was able to leave Bahhunde, knowing she and all the other children are well taken care of.

"It breaks my heart to know that some of these children will never be adopted or have a wonderful childhood as I did," Kacee said.

"I was one of the lucky ones. I was



Kacee with her dad Mark Rhodes

mountains just to see her smile again. It was the kind of love I knew was only 1/100th of what my mother must have felt when she saw me for the first time when she and dad adopted me.

"She looked up at me from her cot, smiled, held her arms up to me, telling me she wanted to be picked up and the instant I held her I said "well I guess I'm not putting you down ever again".

"It was then that I knew all those fund raising efforts from everyone who contributed was well worth it," Kacee said.

Next stop was the toddler's home for three to five-year-olds. "How I didn't break down crying is beyond me. They were all so beautiful, so happy, and so precious. They all turned around and said good morning in the happiest way. They were absolute perfection.

"It was clear these little ones were being well looked after. They were all clean, healthy, well n-ourished and happy. The orphanage is doing an amazing job," she said.

In the girls' home there were about 40 girls aged between five and 18, all princesses according to Kacee and curious as to who she was. All of these children have their own unique story about how they ended up in the home, stories I was dying to know but I also knew it would break



Kacee with her mother Gail Rhodes 30 years ago

shown only love."

Adopted from:

*Maitland Mercury,  
Australia's Regional Newspaper*

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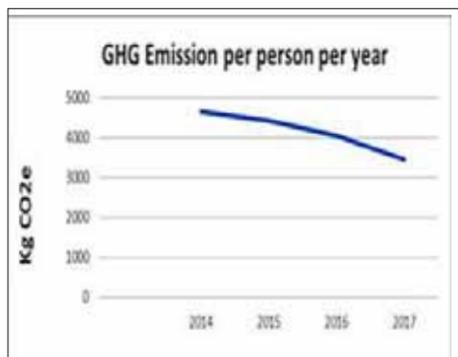
# A Success Story by Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario



The Senior Tamils Centre of Ontario (STC) is the largest Tamil community-based Seniors' organization, having over 1200 member-ship strong, established in 1986, primarily to promote healthy living. The members have proved beyond doubt that, age is not a barrier to learn science behind the complex subject "Global Warming" and understand the extent of damage caused by "Climate change" across the planet. The awareness and realization of the fact that the increase in concentration of CO<sub>2</sub>, one of the Greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere from man-made activities, is the primary cause for the globe to get warm, gave determination to take whatever action necessary to reduce it. With this in mind, an innovative program called "Clean Air Ambassadors Program" (CAA), funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) was, launched under the auspicious of Ms. Soo Wong, Scarborough -Agincourt MPP in April 2015 by the Past President S. Srijeynathan and completed in March 2018 by the current President R.Mahendran.

The objective of the Program is to educate our community at large, as to how "Global Warming" occurs, its impact on "Climate Change" and what measures can be adopted as a way of life, that help reduce the Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Education gives knowledge and the knowledge gives power and conviction for the members of STC to change simple life style activities through CONSERVATION that help reduces the GHG emissions.

Our members who had varied professional and management experiences during their active period of life, have those experiences at disposal for the betterment of our Society in general. One of the members, Ms. Rane Mahalingam, M.Eng., P.Eng., FEC, a Profes-

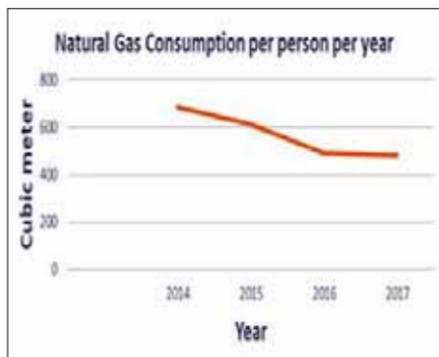


sional Engineer having retired from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, lead the CAA program. Using "Train the Trainers" principle, 13 STC members were trained initially as CAA Coordinators. They in turn recruited and trained 54 CAA Ambassadors. With the three-year grant received from Ontario Trillium Foundation in April 2015, we were able to conduct 100 events and reach out to over 7,300 people consisting of community seniors, youth, children and persons with certain disabilities.

The program educates the community at large on the concept of "Saving Energy Starts at Home" through a series of presentations, seminars, hands on demonstrations and workshops and contributed over 10,500 education hours;

1,055 personnel from 315 participating households, learnt and practiced energy conservation measures, and completed yearly utility consumption data, starting from the baseline year 2014. They not only reduced their consumption of natural gas, electricity and water, each by 30 percent also, demonstrated their per capita GHG emissions from 4,667 Kg in 2014 to 3,458 Kg in 2017, which is 26 percent reduction.

Further, to strive towards the concept "Zero Waste Home" and to achieve the City of Toronto's waste diversion rate from 25 to 70 percent, implement-



ed several sub projects:

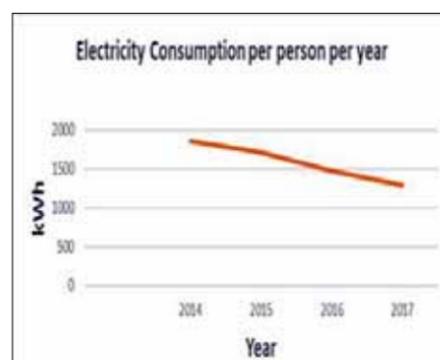
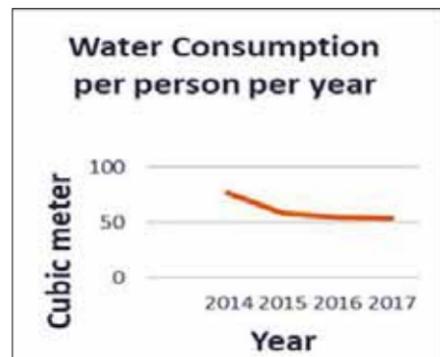
- Stopped the use of Styrofoam products since April 2016 by making STC members to bring their own reusable cup and plates for our daily events. This has prevented 24,000 cups and 20,000 plates entering landfill, while giving us a saving of \$ 3000;

- Issued 535 "Addressed Mails Only" stickers to place in individual letter boxes to stop receiving junk mails. This translated to saving 83 trees and sequester 3,245 Kg of GHG emissions;

- Made 290 mats using 175,000 discarded milk bags. By this process, these bags were transformed for more than one time use. Further these mats are sent for use by developing countries, preventing the non-biodegradable bags from entering our landfills. STC members initially made 42 mats and it was handed over to Celestica limited which accepted the bags on behalf of Milk Bags Unlimited on the 12th of Sep 2014. This sub project has attracted not only seniors but many school children as well.

- Collected 69 pounds of used batteries and 8 pounds of expired medicines from our members, deposited at City of Toronto collection site and prevented from entering landfills

- Initiated "Refuse thin plastic shopping bag" and promoted our members to carry own cloth shopping bags. This, not only prevent the bags from



entering landfills also, entering water ways and damaging aquatic life

Towards the objective of the City of Toronto to double its canopy of trees, we participated in the City's yearly drive of Tree planting and planted 311 trees in the past 3 years. We are committed to continue with this endeavor, yearly.

- Prepare Your Yard for Climate Change", hands on demonstration by World Wildlife Fund Canada

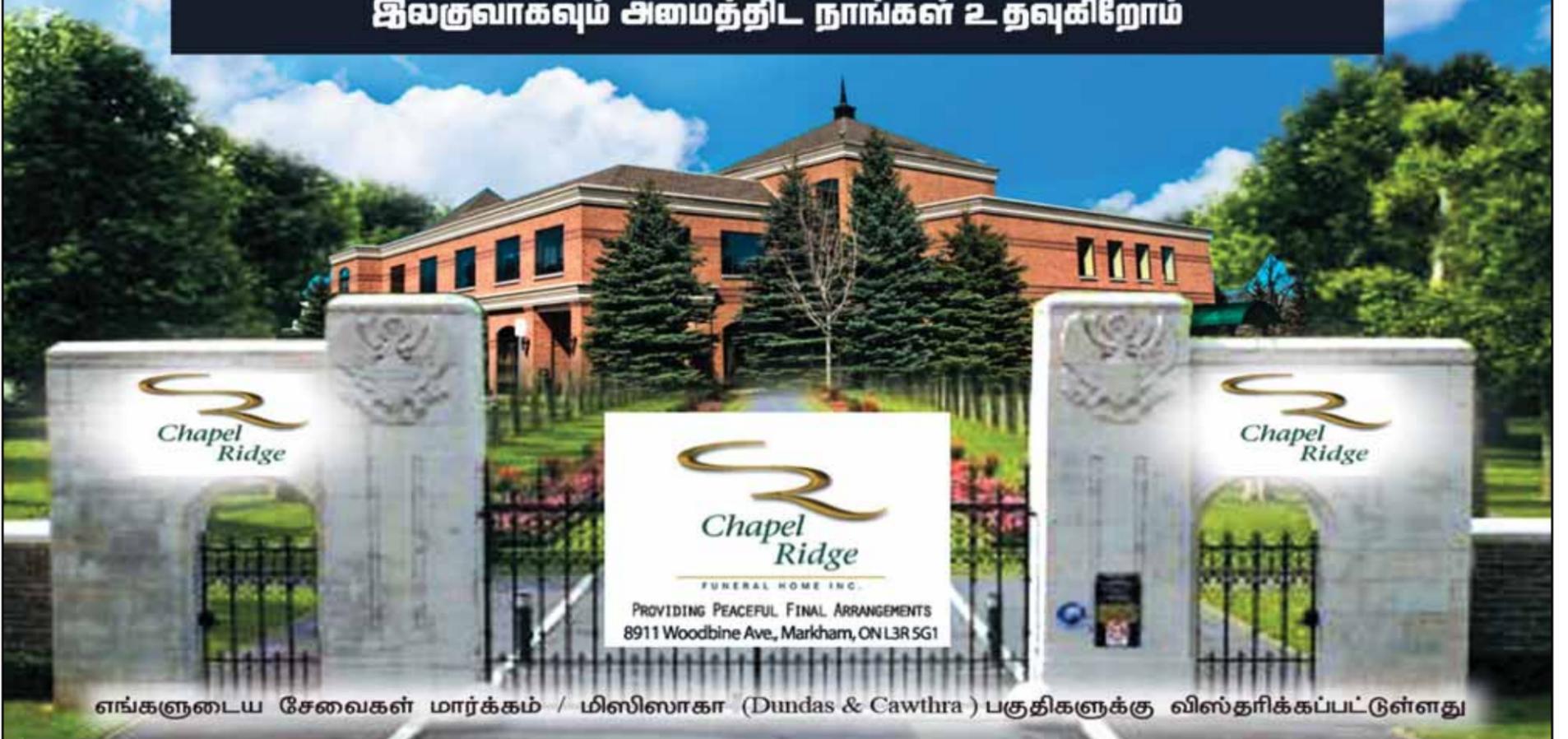
Over the three-year period, 68 STC members, collectively, contributed numerous volunteer hours and completed the complex CAA program successfully by, exceeding targets set by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. It was all possible because of the diligent contributions made by the volunteers, and the meticulous work by the three STC staff. For the great services, they were recognized with appreciation awards at the last Annual General Meeting.

More Pictures on page 25...



உறவுகள் பிரியும்போது மலைகளையே சுமக்கவேண்டிவருகிறது

உங்கள் உறவுகளின் கிறுதியாத்திரையை முறையாகவும்  
இலகுவாகவும் அமைத்திட நாங்கள் உதவுகிறோம்



எங்களுடைய சேவைகள் மார்க்கம் / மிஸிஸாகா (Dundas & Cawthra) பகுதிகளுக்கு விஸ்தரிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது

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# MONSOON JOURNAL'S TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



C.Kamalaharan

Monsoon Journal  
The unbiased journal  
A parfait media presentation  
That sustains its reputation

Through up-to-date information  
And colourful illustration.  
It maintains a wide coverage  
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Arouse interest among the readers:

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Well written mournful appreciations  
With exaggerated glorifications  
As tributes to the departed souls  
Having reached their unknown goals.

Monsoon Journal is a boon for the aged  
Who spend their sunset years caged,  
For them the journal is compact and handy  
To read sipping a glass of brandy.

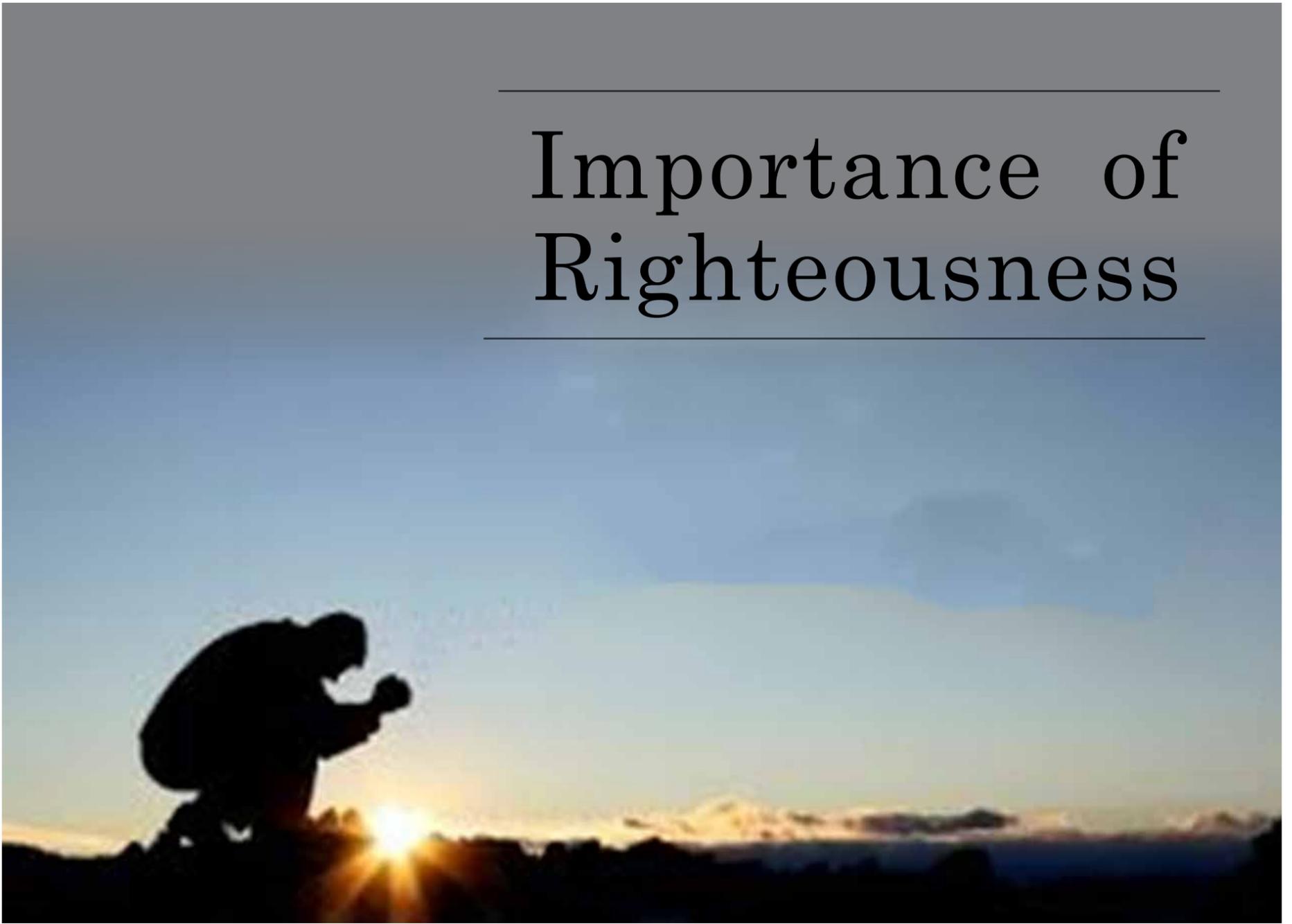
Monsoon Journal's twelfth anniversary celebration  
Has reached a landmark in its monthly publication  
It has provided a wholesome fare  
To those reading with great flair.

Having successfully completed eleven years  
It'll continue this trend for many more years.

To celebrate this important milestone harmoniously  
Montage Awards 2018 will be held ceremoniously  
Congratulations M\_J! Keep on publishing  
And be a model for others in publishing.



# Importance of Righteousness



- lcfabbeville.com

*JJ Atputharajah*

Virtuous deeds alone result in true happiness; all else is inglorious and brings about misery. Bible underlines this idea when it asserts: "Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to it." What does a man require than right conduct, which ends a circle of births. It provides contentment through wealth and fame. A man's pursuance of righteousness leads him to greater heights; his failings bring him down. It is always good to do all good you can, at all times and places and in all possible ways.

A righteous person in Valluvar's contention could be called 'Saanron.' A virtuous man is always possessive of a blemish-less mind. Others are of no use. The idea is similar Jesus's saying in his sermon on the mount: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Thoughts and deeds free of envy, greed, wrath and bitter words alone constitute virtue. We should not put away good deeds; these alone will boost you to the full-until you die and even afterwards. Judge not the inequalities of life as a re-

sult of righteousness and its reverse. It cannot be compared to the man in the palanquin and its bearers. Path to righteousness is the same for the rich and the poor.

It is only the righteous deeds that will secure one from the torment of a cycle of births. We should always embrace virtue and avoid vice. Valluvar's supreme commandment for the practice of righteousness (Aram) is: 'Be spotlessly pure of heart'.

*"Arathanvaruvatheinpam, mattellam,  
Purathapukalumilla"*

(Kural: 31-40)



Valluvar's Views



# The Story of the Milk bag Mat

By: Kumar Punithavel

Everything has a beginning. As recent as the 1960's milk was distributed in heavy glass bottles. Due to glass being a fragile material, the cost to the industry was phenomenal and an alternative way to package the milk was needed (1). Glass bottles were succeeded by cardboard cartons. However, paper and cardboard is made from trees causing deforestation. It was felt that by moving from paper products to plastic a solution to saving our planet would be created. Polythene was discovered in the 1930's. Thus it became widely used in the 1960's as a good substitute to replace paper and card board.

It was in 1967 that DuPont, a Canadian food packaging company, came out with a plastic suitable enough to store milk for distribution. This plastic was inexpensive, light weight and strong. Other countries where milk is put in bags are Argentina, Uruguay, South Africa and China. Our US neighbours buy milk packaged in jugs and cartons which can be either reused or recycled.

What came in as a boon to reduce deforestation became a bane on the planet. Disposal of these bags became a problem. Plastic takes ages to disintegrate and even when it does, it continues as minute particles in the ground and in the air causing health hazards. If the plastic is incinerated, it will emit greenhouse gases. In line with the idiom, "One man's trash is another man's treasure", a new lease on life was given to discarded milk bags. As early as the mid 1990's, women in Southern Ontario were cutting up milk bags to make a yarn which was used for crocheting mats. These mats were donated to various charities to give to the poor to sleep on as well as given to medical services in Angola, Africa to be used as operating surfaces. The mats could be washed off, then dried in the sun and reused. To make an adult size mat between 500 and 600 milk bags are needed, depending on how tight the crochet or weaving is done.

The story of milk bag mats took a great turn with Angela Kesthely. After her Masters in Biology she was working in bone cancer research at the University of Toronto. During this time she got married and with her husband they started a family. Angela decided to take time away from her work to care for her husband and 3 children. However, in 2008, Angela was diagnosed with breast cancer. She underwent the chemo and radiation treatments. During the treatment time, she needed to keep her hands busy so she knit and crocheted hundreds of scarves for the homeless in Toronto. During the radiation treatment time, Angela was at one of her son's basketball games and a lady sat down beside her and asked her if she had ever heard of milk bag mats. She had not, and was intrigued. That night she looked on line, saw what this lady was talking about, and with a bag from her own fridge, she started crocheting a mat. Initially she

collected bags from neighbours and friends. In time she became known among her colleagues as the "Milk Bag Lady".

The turn of events could not have happened at a more opportune moment. In 2010 an earthquake in Haiti rendered people homeless all over the country. There was an out-pouring of benevolence with many pitching in to help the Haitians. Angela had mats in her basement ready to be given away if she could find a charity to take them from her to deliver to the poor. The night after the earthquake there was a person in Haiti being interviewed by a reporter. Angela was watching the news and what did she see on the ground behind the Haitian and the reporter, a milk bag mat. It was from that time on that she knew where the 6 mats she had in her basement were going to go. It was at this time that MILKBAGS unlimited was born.

Angela if she could have a picture with her surrounded by the mats. Angela thought this was a strange request, but said okay. This photo was then put in the local newspaper by the lady who was from the clinic to promote the bag collection. Everyone thought the lady in the clinic was the one who had made the mats. Friends saw the photo in the newspaper and called Angela asking her if these were her mats or the lady's from the clinic. Angela knew these mats were hers and was very hurt by this turn of events. A month later, it was still bothering Angela and she called the local paper and told them the story. The editor of the paper was distraught to think that this mix-up had happened. The editor told her that what had happened was the paper was going to press, they called the chiropractic clinic many times asking the lady at the clinic for information about how many bags it takes to make a mat,

Being a freely distributed community new paper, the message about the mats spread. People who were interested in the story emailed Angela and wanted to join the group of mat makers. To this day, almost all the original mat makers from that newspaper article are still on-board with the project, and still producing hundreds of mats per year.

Thru the charity known as Canadian Food for Children, run by Dr. Andrew Simone, Angela has been able to send mats along with their shipments of food, clothing, medical and school supplies, along with many other necessary items all over the world. The milk bag mats go as packaging material and are then distributed to the poor when they reach the country of destination. Apart from the original country of Haiti, the mats have gone to Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Dominica, Jamaica, Peru, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Philippines, northern Canada and to the homeless in Toronto, Kitchener and in Moncton, New Brunswick. A few years ago, Milk bags Unlimited was also able to send mats to Greece for Syrian refugees.

Milk bags Unlimited is ready to lend a hand to anyone in need, home and away. To date 22 000 mats weighing 220 000 pounds of plastic has been shipped out. Over 11.5 million milk bags have been used and kept out of the landfill. Some people say we are shipping our garbage to another country, but as Angela sees it, the person who receives a mat has it for many many years. A milk bag mat is better than either a broken cardboard box or the bare ground.

The Society for the Aid of Community Empowerment (SACEM) a non-profit organization working among Canadian Tamils for the last thirty five years joined the efforts to make mats a year ago. This group of wonderful people have made 300 mats using 3000 pounds of plastic bags or 150,000 milk bags.

Angela's efforts started a team of people in a community crocheting mats. As of about 5 years ago, she started weaving the mats which made it possible for the thousands of people in schools, churches, senior's centres, probation offices and people who work alone at home, to create the mats for the poor.

Angela has been to Haiti twice and now Nicaragua twice to teach women and children there to make mats and handbags from the plastic. She NEVER takes money from the people who she teaches. If they use the mats for themselves, or if they sell a mat or two and get a little money for their own personal needs, they keep all of it.

This is a good news story; both the giver and receiver wins. We feel empowered to do something for our environment and the poor, and the receiver gets something that may be the nicest thing they will ever receive.

Angela's efforts started as an acorn, today it has grown to be a large Oak, perhaps one day it will be an Oak forest.



Angela Kesthely proudly holding a mat



Couple of milk bag mats

The promotion of bag collection came in a very devious way. Someone in her community said they wanted to collect bags for her, so they came to her home, to take a photo of her mats to use in their office to have clients of a chiropractic clinic bring in their bags when they had an appointment. The lady then asked An-

and how long it takes to make a mat, but the lady said she was busy and could not give her the details. She couldn't give the details because she did not know the answers to the questions. At this time, the editor promised Angela that she would do another story to make amends for the first publication.

# The World in a Decade

By: *Sudarsha Sritharan*

In the course of ten years, the world will undergo changes in relations to the environment, society, and technology. There will be positive and negative changes.

The environment has so many beneficial resources that will be taken advantage of. There will be many malls, factories, offices, buildings, and more. These buildings destroy ecosystems in order to be built. This means that many animals will be left with nowhere to life and to survive harsh weathers. Not only will it destroy ecosystems, but it will cause pollution. Pollution is a major hazard to the air we breathe and the air animals breathe. However, this is not the only issue.

There are so many different religions and traditions, but they are fading. Many people will slowly adapt into western traditions and forget their own native culture. This will lead to less traditions and religions. Even though there has been many negative changes in the world, technology has been very helpful to us. Technology has helped with transportation. In the next decade, the world will have hands-free technology. Many cars will be designed handless because it will make it easier for humans. Not only that, there will be more eco-friendly cars. Eco-friendly cars can help maintain pollution. Technology also helps us with saving lives. In the future, there will be robots performing surgery, so there will be more lives saved. Technology will also help with school. In the future, there'll be schools for any grade online. It will be beneficial for parents and students.

Education has been very important to many students. In the next decade, many things will be harder. More people are finding ways to make robots to do work. This will impact many students wanting to learn and apply for jobs.

In the next decade, there will be not a lot of clean resources. There will be unclean water. Many things, such as littering, pollution, and more, are one of the major causes for unclean resources. There will be contaminated water. Not only will water be a problem, but so will food. Every year, there are more processed foods. This leads to more deaths every year. A lot of these foods contain fats and other ingredients that most people don't know will kill them. In the next decade, there'll be no fresh foods.

Politics has also been a major issue that should be taken care of. There are so many wars that have destructed so many countries. In the future, there will be more wars and weapons killing innocent people. In the next decade, there will be more wars than peacekeeping. Wars have separated and destroyed countries.

In the next decade, the world will undergo many changes. It is an individual's responsibility to take care of the world, so it can result in a positive and safe place for anyone to live in.



- Sudarsha Sritharan  
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# LORD SHIVA: THE COSMIC DANCER OF UNIVERSE

## THE SECRET BEHIND CERN RESEARCH INSTITUTE AND THE LORD NATARAJA

By: Dr. Uthayan Thurairajah

The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) obtained from the acronym for the French Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire, a provisional organization established in 1952 with the mandate of setting a world-class fundamental physics research organization in Europe. CERN primary function is the overseeing of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) which is located on the French/Swiss border, Geneva, Switzerland.

CERN is the most advanced and sophisticated experimental laboratory in the particle, theoretical and nuclear physics in the world and the place where core technologies of the internet were first elaborated. In 2004, a tall statue of the dancing Shiva was unveiled at CERN. The Lord Shiva statue explains the significance of the symbol of Shiva's cosmic dance.

### Atom Movement & Cosmic Dance

Lord Shiva symbolized as an embodiment of power. His powerful dance is an example of the enormous energy and power he possessed. Shiva's dance was so robust that is why he was called as 'Nataraja' which means king of dance. There is a lot of physics behind Shiva's cosmic dance.

You might be wondering how a Saiva God got a place in the science center. It is quite surprising. Atheists may be entirely disagreeing with the idea of the grounding of a religious symbol in a place which is full of people with practical intellect. But, scientists are now digging deeper into ancient archives for their discoveries. They are turning towards the wisdom of Tamil and are in continuous search for hidden sciences. CERN's physicists observed and analyzed the cosmic dance of Shiva as the dance of subatomic particle. On June 18, 2004, a 2m tall statue of Saiva deity Shiva in his dance posture was design as a new landmark.

### Shiva's Rudra Tandava

Shiva's cosmic dance symbolizes the interaction between static and dynamic energy flow. This energy flow contains five principles - Creation, destruction, protection, illusion, and liberation. Shiva's Rudra Tandava is a dance of destruction. The damage happens with the occurring of radiant fire, wild thunderstorms spreading all over the universe destroying and shattering everything including the Sun, Moon and Astral bodies. His appearance is so different and unique, with matted hair, three marks of ash on his forehead, he has a drum in upright hand. Left leg is lifted and balancing his entire body standing on a demon of ignorance. Snakes are crawling over his legs, arms, and hair. On his head is a knotted hair, where Goddess Ganga the representing holy river sits. The skull over his head represents the conquest over death. Under his feet was a demon who expressed ignorance. Lord Shiva suppressed demon by stamping and standing on him with one leg.

You might be in doubt as to how is this dance related to physics? What is the science behind it? Why did excellent research institution like CERN setup statue of Saiva (Hindu) God? There is a reason behind everything. Shiva's cosmic dance is popularly known as the dance of bliss and symbolizes the universal cycles of creation and destruction. It also represents the daily rhythm of birth and death.

### Dance of Siva at the World Stage

Ananda is a Son of a Sri Lankan Tamil father Muthu Coomaraswamy, a legislator and philosopher who departed when he was a child, and an English mother, Elizabeth Beeby. Ananda is a genius writer flourished most eloquently in his inspired exposition of the Nataraja

statue made famous in Chola statues from Tamil Nadu. The dancing God Shiva's story is based on his interpretations of Tamil Saiva Siddhanta texts. Coomaraswamy's (1912) analysis of the Nataraja statue appealed widely to leading figures of his time. Celebrated French sculptor August Rodin (1913) in his essay 'La Danse de Siva' illustrated it with the same Nataraja statue. The reputation of Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877-1947) as a towering art historian of the twentieth century is well known through his writings integrating visual art, religion, literature, and metaphysics.

### Scientist Capra and Cosmic Dance

World-renowned professor of Nuclear physics, Fritjof Capra, a famous scientist, and an author wrote about Lord Shiva in his article "The Dance Of Shiva: The Hindu View of Matter in the Light of Modern Physics," and also in another book called "The Tao Of Physics." He beautifully correlates Shiva's cosmic dance to modern physics. The Wave Composition of Matter Explains the Atomic Structure of Matter. The 'Particle' as the Wave-Center of a Spherical Standing Wave in Space explains the cosmic dance of Nataraja.

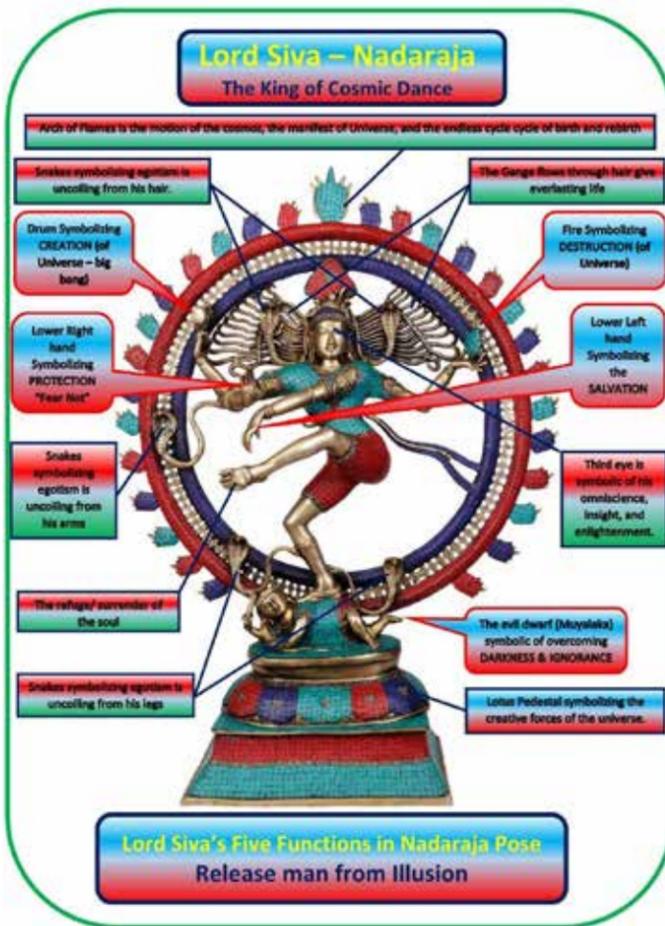
### Lord Shiva as a Scientific Symbol



Ananda K. Coomaraswamy,

CERN Shiva statue plaque explains the importance of Lord Shiva's cosmic dance. A few quotes are taken from the plate. "Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, seeing beyond the unsurpassed rhythm, beauty, power, and grace of the Nataraja, once wrote of it "It is the clearest image of the activity of God which any art or religion can boast of." More recently, Fritjof Capra explained that "Modern physics has shown that the rhythm of creation and destruction is not only manifest in the turn of the seasons and in the birth and death of all living creatures, but is also the very essence of inorganic matter," and that "For the modern physicists, then, Shiva's dance is the dance of subatomic matter."

It is indeed as Capra concluded: "Hun-



fritjof Capra

dreds of years ago, Indian artists created visual images of dancing Shiva in a beautiful series of bronzes. In our time, physicists have used the most advanced technology to portray the patterns of the cosmic dance. The symbol of the cosmic dance thus unifies ancient mythology, religious art, and modern physics."

### Concern about LHC

People are concern about the underlying science, technology, and the particle accelerator is not up to the task at hand. They concerned that scientists are playing with fire, and cannot sense given the fundamental limitations of their mindsets. They believe that the collider/accelerator, are entirely inadequate to carry out such experimentation in a responsible manner. In other words, they think that scientists are trying to play in the major leagues with sticks and stones.

What does the dancing Lord Nataraj have to do with the Large Hadron Collider? Let us have a closer look. Others widely portrayed that the Saiva God Shiva as the cosmic dancer who performs his divine dance to destroy a weary universe, but God Shiva is an absolute in Saiva tradition and he conducts all five actions including destruction.

The deadly potential of a particle accelerator which

collides opposing streams of protons and most recently leads ions at the speed of light to create a big bang. We sincerely hope that the unique and strategic placement of this sacred statue will somehow represent a favorable outcome of CERN's endeavors, and will not prove to be a bad sign. The decision-makers at CERN are well aware of the potential for the destructive forces and pushing the edge of the cover. Lawsuits have been filed, position papers have been written, and some of the brightest scientists have made several requests to end CERN operation. However, the experiments relentlessly continue.

### The End of the World

The world community concern about the LHC impact on every resident of planet Earth, as well as the planet itself. They question how those at the very top of the scientific decision-making process of such great importance without taking the counsel of the people except their own very inborn society that pursues scientific and technological advancement at all and any cost.

They are suspicious about the theoretical and technological capacity of the scientists to determine or assess the outcomes of this highly risky experimentation. Electro Magnetic Radiation toxic side effects may linger for years, even decades before they are correlated to the powerful energies which are unleashed within this 27 km tunnel.

Albert Einstein said, "Science without religion is lame, and Religion without science is blind." The discoveries in modern science have already been known for centuries. Our culture, heritage, and traditions are not blind beliefs, but there is some scientific logic behind everything. The Lord Shiva's cosmic dance is a solid proof. Tamils proud of their Saiva religion and the depth of knowledge which created a visual image of dancing Shiva in several Centuries ago, suite the modern science. The symbol of the cosmic dance thus unifies ancient mythology, religious art, and modern physics. Ancient Tamils could connect the missing pieces and be able to look the holistic way of the universe, nature, religion, science, and technology.



Uthayan Thurairajah, Ph.D., RSE, LC, P.Eng.,FEC, is a Project Manager at WSP with over twenty years of experience in Electrical Engineering and Lighting field, and he also holds a Lecturer position at Ryerson University & professor at Centennial. Uthayan is a member of several Canadian and international professional association including Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO) and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research (APTR). He has worked on multi-disciplinary lighting and electrical projects for various clients. He researches the subject of light and 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 of lighting design & health. He is passionate about integrating science and health into the lighting design.



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## IMMIGRATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CANADA

by T. Sivayogapathy,

EX-MITSUBISHI, COLOMBO/TOKYO

The international Monetary Fund (IMF) raised its estimate for Economic Growth in Canada, for the year 2018. IMF says that, there would be a boost for Global Economic Growth too, in the year 2019. Canada's Economy will grow 2.3% in the year 2018 and 3.9% in the year 2019. Thus Canada has become one of the fastest growing economies in the developed world.

The organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) projects that, the Global Economy will grow by 3.7% in the year 2018 and 3.6% in the year 2019.

Canada is a country built largely by Immigrants, welcoming more than 17 million new-comers for the last 150 years. To-day, more than 20% - or about one out of five Canadians was born in another country, according to Statistics Canada.

Immigration fuels Canada's population growth of 1.7 million in seven years, since the last Census in the year 2011.

Over the coming years, newcomers to Canada will account for more and more of the Country's Population growth, due to low fertility and an aging population.

Canada is a Land of so many opportu-

nities, in many fields of economic sectors; Thereby, Canada has done well in selecting Immigrants, who are a good fit for Country's Labour market and in cultivating an environment that welcomes Immigrants. Also, Canada is making headway towards improving outcomes for Immigrants.

Canada's University graduate programmes devoted to advanced study for Immigration Policy, services and experiences, with a commitment to building a society, who shall be an asset, in respective fields of Canadian Economy. Research into challenges for Immigrants is also resulted in Programmes that give newcomers a boost in their respective workplaces.

The bridging Programmes provide training that help internationally educated skilled Professionals to get jobs in their suitable fields.

Canada is among the four countries of the world that consistently attract the top tier of highly skilled Immigrants, as per new research by the World Bank.

Four developed countries – the U.S., U.K, Australia and Canada attract the vast majority of the world's Immigrants, the researchers have found. That's great news for Canada, as those people typically come with



an existing source of Wealth and their skill-sets help to boost and change the Economy, wherever they Land in Canada. The weight of the evidence points to high-skilled immigrants boosting innovation and Productivity, mainly through the increased quantity of skilled individuals.

The art of networking is a very important key factor for Immigrant Entrepreneurs. In order to gain Canadian experience and Language skills, exchange of knowhow, ideas and develop Innovation and Research with the senior Canadian Entrepreneurs, Networking is very important in Business

Associations, Seminars, Conferences and Social clubs like Rotary Club and Media.

The Public Relation (P.R.) skills for the new immigrants are a great asset for the above mentioned Productive Networking.

The government of Canada's new Global Skills strategy will facilitate faster access to top Global talent for companies doing business in Canada that are committing to bring new skills to Canada and create more Canadian jobs. Whether bringing in Professional to train Canadian workers or hiring global talent with highly specialised, in-demand skills, the Global Skills Strategy will help innovative firms in Canada, to thrive, creating economic growth and middle-class jobs.

The strategy will track employers' commitments to create jobs, transfer knowledge and train Canadian Workers, facilitating new Investment in Canada,

continues to compete in a global innovation race. It is now very evident that Global skills strategy for new Immigrants, shall promote positively to aid Innovation, Research and quality Entrepreneurship in Canada, for further Economic Development.



# The Craziiness of Cryptocurrencies

Arun Senathirajah MBA  
(Banking Mgmt)

Monsoon Journal readers may remember in December 2013 issue we have published on an article titled 'ELECTRONIC MONEY - Digital Currency - The Bitcoin' that's in an early stage of Cryptocurrency emergence. Bitcoins are created digitally through a "mining" process that requires powerful computers to solve complex algorithms and crunch numbers. They are currently created at the rate of 25 Bitcoins every 10 minutes and will be capped at 21 million, a level that is expected to be reached in 2140.

Cryptocurrency is a form of digital money that is designed to be secure and, in many cases, anonymous.

It is a currency associated with the internet that uses cryptography, the process of converting legible information into an almost uncrackable code, to track purchases and transfers. Cryptocurrency made the leap from being an academic concept to (virtual) reality with the creation of Bitcoin in 2009. While Bitcoin attracted a growing following in subsequent years, it captured significant investor and media attention in April 2013 when it peaked at a record \$266 per bitcoin after surging 10-fold in the preceding two months. Bitcoin sported a market value of over \$2 billion at its peak, but a 50% plunge shortly thereafter sparked a raging debate about the future of cryptocurrencies in general and Bitcoin in particular. So, will these alternative currencies eventually supplant conventional currencies and become as ubiquitous as dollars and euros someday? Or are cryptocurrencies a passing fad that will flame out before long? The answer lies with Bitcoin.

These characteristics make Bitcoin fundamentally different from a fiat currency, which is backed by the full faith and credit of its government. Fiat currency issuance is a highly centralized activity supervised by a nation's central bank. While the bank regulates the amount of currency issued in accordance with its monetary policy objectives, there is theoretically no upper limit to the amount of such currency issuance. In addition, local currency deposits are generally insured against bank failures by a government body. Bitcoin, on the other hand, has no such support mechanisms. The value of a Bitcoin is wholly dependent on what investors are willing to pay for it at a point in time. As well, if a Bitcoin exchange folds up, clients with Bitcoin balances have no recourse to get them back. "Cryptocurrencies are an important technological innovation that



has the potential to change the way business transactions are conducted," says Andrew Lo, director of the MIT Laboratory for Financial Engineering in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Bitcoin emerged in early 2009, in the wake of the near-collapse of the global financial system, as digital platform carrying programmable money with no links to governments, central banks or financial institutions. There are so many new Cryptocurrencies has emerged in the market. Following are some examples.

**Bitcoin (BTC):** The first of its kind and the largest cryptocurrency today was created by an unknown inventor, or group of developers, who uses the pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto. The original concept was to produce a means of exchange, independent of any central authority that could be transferred electronically in a secure, verifiable and immutable way.

**Ethereum (ETHEREUM):** The world's second-largest cryptocurrency today, Ethereum is considered by many as "the next Bitcoin". Created by Russian programmer Vitalik Buterin, Ethereum supports a modified version of Nakamoto consensus via transaction-based state transitions. It has received international recognition and support from giant organizations such as Microsoft and Intel.

**Litecoin (LTC):** Designed by former Google engineer, Charles Lee, to improve Bitcoin's technology. The Litecoin Network aims to process a block every 2.5 minutes, rather than Bitcoin's 10 minutes. The developers claim that this allows Litecoin to have faster transaction confirmation. Litecoin uses scrypt in its proof-of-work algorithm, which makes the process of mining Litecoin more complicated and more expensive than Bitcoin.

**Ethereum Classic (ETC):** it appeared as a result of disagreement with the Ethereum Foundation regarding The DAO Hard Fork. It united members of the Ethereum community who rejected the hard fork on philosophical grounds.

**Dash (DASH):** Developed by software programmer, Evan Duffield. On top of Bitcoin's feature set, it currently offers instant transactions (Instant-Send), private transactions (Private-Send) and operates a self-governing and self-funding model that enables the Dash network to pay individuals and businesses to perform work that adds value to the network.

**XRP by Ripple Labs (XRP):** Perhaps the most widely adopted cryptocurrency, XRP was created by American programmer, Jed McCaleb. One of the specific functions of XRP is as a bridge currency,[103] which can be necessary if no direct exchange is available between two currencies at a specific time. Ripple was described as a significant competitor of Bitcoin because of its real-time international money transfers.

Trading platforms warn the prospective investors as 'Cryptocurrencies can fluctuate widely in prices and are therefore not appropriate for all investors. Past performance is not an indication of future results. Your capital is at risk'. Further no governments or authorities are monitoring its reserve base or ongoing trading and transactions. Every transaction is recorded in a digital ledger distributed across a network of computers, known as a 'Blockchain'. The coins are similar to equity in an initial public offering, but without the regulatory oversight or backing of financial institutions. Instead of shares, investors get digital tokens needed to gain access to the platform, product or service. The bet is that demand will drive up their value if the new app or digital currency takes off. The technology has enormous potential to disrupt the global financial sector. Nobody knows its real worth. Further it is difficult to assess cash flows of a business it is engaged in cryptocurrency transactions.

Kenn Bosak, Bitcoin investor, tutor and consultant says first, need to know how the technology works, how to safeguard, store and transfer their assets and how to recover them if something

goes wrong. Then, if the global financial system crashes and burns, as some cryptofanatics fear, those digital assets could have a big advantage over traditional investments – because they can be used as portable currency. "You can't take your Facebook stock to Wal-Mart." While the number of merchants who accept cryptocurrencies has steadily increased, they are still very much in the minority. For cryptocurrencies to become more widely used, they have to first gain widespread acceptance among consumers. However, their relative complexity compared to conventional currencies will likely deter most people, except for the technologically adept.

## The Future

Governments and Central banks are unwilling to give up their money monopoly and worried about the digital currency's adoption by terrorists, drug traffickers and money launderers eager to hide their financial dealings. Some of the limitations that cryptocurrencies presently face – such as the fact that one's digital fortune can be erased by a computer crash, or that a virtual vault may be ransacked by a hacker – may be overcome in time through technological advances. What will be harder to surmount is the basic paradox that bedevils cryptocurrencies – the more popular they become, the more regulation and government scrutiny they are likely to attract, which erodes the fundamental premise for their existence. A cryptocurrency that aspires to become part of the mainstream financial system may have to satisfy widely divergent criteria. Mathematically complex (to avoid fraud and hacker attacks) but easy for consumers to understand; decentralized but with adequate consumer safeguards and protection; and preserve user anonymity without being a conduit for tax evasion, money laundering and other nefarious activities are the main issues facing the this currencies to become successful in the virtual and global financial system. The emergence of Bitcoin has sparked a debate about its future and that of other cryptocurrencies. Despite Bitcoin's recent issues, its success since its 2009 launch has inspired the creation of alternative cryptocurrencies such as Litecoin, Ripple and MintChip. A cryptocurrency that aspires to become part of the mainstream financial system would have to satisfy very divergent criteria. While that possibility looks remote, there is little doubt that Bitcoin's success or failure in dealing with the challenges it faces may determine the fortunes of other cryptocurrencies in the years ahead.



# Are You comdu.it's Next Diaspora Changemaker?

By Kumaran Nadesan

When a few of us launched comdu.it in 2014, we did so with the vision to mobilise diaspora networks for the sustainable development of vulnerable communities in Sri Lanka that survived the long and bloody armed ethnic conflict in that country.

This vision has guided our commitment to help shift diaspora engagement from charity to sustainability, from aid to economic development, and from sending remittances to building knowledge-based economies instead. Even as we continue to advance this important work, we constantly remind ourselves of the importance of co-creation and critical introspection alongside local communities so as to strengthen their resiliency and autonomy to determine their own futures. Our vision also necessitates the re-casting of the roles and principles of diaspora engagement as we increasingly assume shared responsibility for the next generation of leaders at home and in Sri Lanka.

In that sense, we are inordinately proud of our diaspora changemakers. Over the past two years, we have successfully placed a dozen diaspora professionals – from municipal planners to educators and lawyers to business professionals – in community building projects throughout the North and East of Sri Lanka. It has meant sacrifices for every one of our changemakers, small and large. It has meant challenges, apparent and hidden. It has meant costs, financial and otherwise. But each return is educational, and every experience life changing. In all of this, we are guided by constantly asking ourselves what impact we are creating for local communities on their terms, not ours.

Building on past successes, we are now accepting applications for qualified and deeply committed diaspora professionals (young, new, mid-career, or retired) for 20 placements that are available as part of our 2018 Sri Lanka



Mission.

Covering four focus areas – including capacity building (especially in the public sector), economic empowerment, leadership development, and psychosocial support – these 20 positions are invaluable opportunities to help create much-needed sustainability in war-impacted communities through an immersive and deeply transformational personal and professional experience.

Distributed amongst our focus areas are the following exciting opportunities:

- Agronomist at the Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development (Jaffna)
- Blockchain Advisor at YarLIT Hub

(Jaffna)

- Community Tourism Development Specialist at Mannar District Chamber of Commerce (Mannar)
- Early Childhood Educator at Well-spring Centre for Learning (Jaffna)
- Grant Writer at Centre for Women and Development (Jaffna)
- Grant Writer at Social, Economical and Environmental Developers (Vavuniya)
- Graphic Designer at Bridging Lanka (Mannar)
- Plant Production Management Consultant at Udupidy Ceylon Spinning & Textile Mills (Jaffna)
- Project Management Consultant at Institute of Regional Development

and Governance (Kilinochchi)

- Psychosocial Support Officer at Lanka Evangelical Alliance Development Service (Colombo)
- Research Associate at INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre (Colombo)
- Research Associate at Point Pedro Institute of Development (Jaffna)
- Research Programme Officer at Women's Education and Research Centre (Colombo)
- Trauma Counsellor at Organisation for Rehabilitation of the Handicapped (Vavuniya)
- Youth Facilitator – Creative Arts at Church of the American Ceylon Mission (Batticaloa)
- Youth Facilitator – ESL at Church of the American Ceylon Mission (Batticaloa)
- Youth Facilitator – ESL at Grace Girls' Home (Trincomalee)
- Youth Facilitator – ESL at Muthu Nava Ratna Trust (Mullaitivu)
- Youth Facilitator – ICT at J/ Kopay Christian College (Jaffna)
- Youth Facilitator – Soft Skills at Organisation of People for Engagement and Enterprise (Mannar)

To see the full descriptions of the above positions, learn more about our local partners, and to apply online, please visit <http://comdu.it/our-programs>.

Canadian candidates must apply by April 8, 2018. German and other international candidates must apply by May 20, 2018.

As we keep building our knowledge movement, we are excited by so many others – friends and strangers alike – who are taking up our call and starting to do similar work while we build on the work of those who came before us.

We all have a role to play – and we hope you will consider becoming a part of our vision.

*Kumaran Nadesan is a civil servant in the Government of Ontario, and the Founding Chair of comdu.it.*



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## Monsoon Kitchen



### 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 and Rajini Nathan are both food enthusiasts from England. Niranjini, who lives in London, has a degree in Human Biology and is a trained chef. She makes it her business to know everything about what she eats, from nutritional value to source producers. Follow her food obsession on Instagram @ninjaeatsfood.

Rajini, lives in Toronto and has a background in psychology. Her speciality is in Tamil food from around the world, catch up on her meal ideas on Instagram @tamil\_food.

## PURAN POLI/ OPPUTTU

This dish is widely known throughout various regions in India and by a variety of names. You might have even eaten it without knowing what it is called. It is the Poli or Boli as some Tamil auntys' refer to it.

Poli is a very easy dish to make that makes a great afternoon snack and is healthy and nutritious.



### Ingredients:

- For the Dough:-
- 1 cup All-purpose flour (maida maavu)
- 1 cup Wheat flour (Aatta maavu)
- ¼ cup oil (Ennai)
- Pinch of salt (uppu)
- ¼ tsp turmeric (manjal)
- Water to mix dough (thanni)
- A little ghee (nei)

### For the stuffing:-

- ¼ cup chana dhal (kadalai paruppu)
- ½ cup jaggery (vellum)
- ¼ tsp Cardamom powder (Elakkai podi)
- ¼ tsp Nutmeg powder (jaathikkai podi)
- ¼ cup grated coconut (thiruvina thengai)
- 1 Tbs ghee (nei)

### Method:

Sieve the all-purpose flour, the wheat flour, turmeric and salt into a bowl and mix with a little water until the flour comes together to form a dough. Add the oil and massage the dough until all the oil is absorbed and the dough is stretchy and soft. Leave the dough to rest for 30 mins.

Soak the chana dhal in water for 10 mins and then pressure cook it with a cup of water or till the lentil is soft and mushy. Drain the water and let the lentils cool. Next add the lentils and jaggery to a mixer and blend them together to form a paste. You could also just do this by hand using powdered jaggery and mix the lentils and jaggery together until they are completely combined.

In a pan heat a tablespoon of ghee and add the mix to this with the cardamom and nutmeg powders. Cook the paste for 5 mins. Leave the mixture to cool, mix the grated coconut and roll into small round balls.

Once the dough has rested for 30 mins, take a small amount and form a small thick round flat base. Add the stuffing and roll the dough into chapathis. Cook on a medium flame with a little ghee on a flat pan. Enjoy hot or cold, with milk, jam or just on it's own.

Try making this recipe this month and do hashtag #monsoonjournal on Instagram and send us your pics, comments and feedback. Spread the love (and recipe!)



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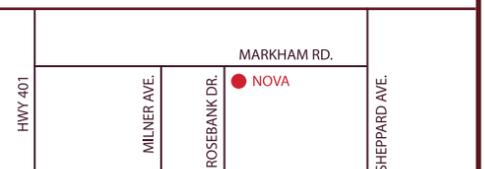
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Registered Canadian Immigration Consultant/CEO,  
Former Visa Officer, Canadian High Commission,  
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# Canadian Tamil Business Community celebrates 'CTCC 20th Awards Gala' with woman President at the helm



President Dilani Gunarajah



Scarborough - Rouge Park MP  
Gary Anandasangaree



Ontario Chamber of Commerce President  
& CEO Rocco Rossi



Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti



President Dilani Gunarajah with Mayor John Tory and  
Councillor Neethan Shan



Best Entrepreneur Award winner Navam Jagan with Sponsor Tekno  
Media President Mathan Shan and President Dilani Gunarajah



Best Young Entrepreneur Award winner Jay Vasantharajah  
with Sponsor Kanish & Partners Julien Emmanuel  
and President Dilani Gunarajah



Best Woman Entrepreneur Award winner Ms. Sharmilli Thangarajah  
with Sponsor RBC Branch Manager Mohan Sundaramohan &  
RVP Roshni Mukherjee and President Dilani Gunarajah



Marketing Award winner Chandran Rasalingam with Sponsor  
CIBC Mortgage Managers Vince Sinnadurai & Mani Chittur and  
President Dilani Gunarajah



Veena by Priya Ratnakumar



CTCC Board of Directors with Scarborough - Rouge Park MP Gary Anandasangaree



Most Outstanding Community Service Person Award winner  
Karthigesu Yoganathan with President Dilani Gunarajah

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Monsoon Journal is delighted to host Montage Awards 2018 and takes pride in honouring citizens providing exemplary services to the community. Given below are the views of two of the special persons recognized at Montage Awards 2018. They spoke to Harrish Thirukumaran, Editorial & Features contributor for Monsoon Journal recently.

Our gratitude and appreciation for Harrish for talking to the awardees in-depth:

# 2018 Montage Awards: Monsoon Journal Interview with Siva Sivapragasam

Siva Sivapragasam is a Media Professional who graduated from the University of Sri Lanka with an Economics Honours degree. He received his secondary education at Royal College, a prestigious educational institution in Colombo, Sri Lanka. His interest and passion for Journalism made him join the Associated Newspapers (Ceylon) Ltd. in 1961 after graduation. This Media organization is the largest Newspaper group in Sri Lanka and he worked here for the Daily News, the premier English Daily in Sri Lanka. He was the newspaper's Finance Editor covering Financial News and contributing features relating to Finance and Business.

In 1966, the Late. Esmond Wickremasinghe (Ranil Wickramasinghe's Father) then Managing Director of Associated Newspapers purchased Express Newspapers (Ceylon) Ltd. and took Mr. Sivapragasam along with him to help manage the Newspaper firm he had acquired. Mr. Sivapragasam functioned as the Secretary & also the Marketing Manager for the Virakesari Group for more than 30 years. During his career here, he also edited several Advertising supplements for the Newspaper.

Mr. Sivapragasam migrated to Canada in 1997 and continued his media work managing the Sri Lankan Business and Information Directory published by Messrs. Nanda Publications. He was also a Director of the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce associating himself in the Chamber's annual events and functioned as the Editor of the Annual Souvenir of the Chamber. In addition to this, he has also made contributions to local Canadian ethnic Newspapers. He has also participated in Radio and TV Programmes both in Sri Lanka and Canada by way of Interviews, discussions and seminars. He is currently the Executive Editor of "Monsoon Journal", a monthly English Newspaper for the South Asian Community.

His recent editorial contribution was an article titled "The Beginning of the Modi Era" appearing as Chapter 1 in a Book on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi – "Modi's Blueprint for India", published by Pentagon Press, New Delhi. Mr. Sivapragasam possesses over 50 years of Media experience.



Photo of Siva & Harrish

Q. I read that you earned an Economics degree from the University of Sri Lanka prior to immigrating to Canada in 1997, yet your career has moved towards journalism itself. What factors drove you to pursue it full-time?

A. After graduation, I was really looking out for a public service appointment, but at that time there was a restriction where you had to be very conversant in the official language, which is Sinhala. And we had education in English, so we had a disadvantage, so naturally I had to go into the private sector. I had a passion for writing and journalism while I was in high school and at the university. There was an opening available in an English newspaper, Daily News at Lakehouse, first as a training journalist and then after about a year I was confirmed and then naturally rose up to the position of financial editor of the Daily News. It was really a passion for journalism that drove me into this field.

Q. Were there any specific successes or challenges that you encountered from a managerial perspective as a Marketing Manager for the Virakesari Group?

A. Well what happened was the Lakehouse Group Newspapers was originally privately-owned, and then the government took it over. It became a state media institution. So, once one of the directors at Lakehouse bought Tamil newspaper Virakesari, he offered me a job of Marketing Manager, which is different from journalism. And asked me if I would like to take over this new challenging appointment of marketing you know. Because there I would be expanding the obligations, and once I went there we had about four or five new publications coming up and I took charge of marketing for newspaper sales and advertising. So, it was really a challenge in the sense that #1 it was a new field for me, going from journalism into marketing.

Secondly, being a Virakesari newspaper, most of our corporate clients, you know high-end corporate clients, normally they are advertising in an English newspaper. So, I had to really convince them that there is a sizeable market among the Tamil community as well for their goods and services. I was able to pull through there during the first year a couple of corporate clients

to start advertising like banks and insurance companies. They started coming in because at that time Jaffna was the second biggest market for consumer goods, so there easiest and best way of promotion was through the print media because at that time there was no TV or computer technology. Any source of information or any marketing strategy had to be done through print media. So, they depended on the newspapers for most of their expansion programs and marketing programs. Also, whether state institutions or these companies wanted government information to go into the Tamil community, they would have to seek a newspaper.

Q. What is your perspective on computer technology in marketing and journalism?

A. At this point in my career, we introduced computer technology for printing. There are certain advantages of computer technology as compared with the former archaic method of printing. The thing is you can get a lot of colour advertising done through computer technology. Also, for most of the consumer products, most readers prefer to see them in colour. Another



distinct advantage of computer technology, apart from colour, is the fact that you can always get the latest news and information put into the paper before it is printed because its faster than print media. Also, with breaking news, we get it in a few seconds like what happened yesterday in downtown (Toronto).

Earlier, the news could come through a ticker system like Reuters, an ancient machine that would take quite a while for the news to come in. But here, within a second, we can know what is happening in any other part of the world. So being able to get the latest up-to-date news in a matter of minutes that is another advantage of computer technology being introduced in the media. You can provide the reader with the latest news unfolding in the world.

Q. What are your thoughts on the growth of social media such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram in the promotion of news?

A. The advantage of social media is that it grows into a wider circle of people, you know, unlike a newspaper. Because it goes from one friend to another friend, it goes on like that, right? It goes from one circle of friends to another circle of friends and then it goes on. The news is being transmitted on a very wider scale than print media. Print media is only available to the person who has access to that specific

newspaper. It doesn't travel after that, but with social media, it travels in a wider way and it is still quicker I would say for the dissemination of news and information than through the TV or any other media. These are the two main advantages where social media is concerned.

The only problem is that there is no control. That it is a big problem, whereas in print media there is a lot of control in dissemination. Where we have journalists, there are parameters of control like liability and legal constraints.

Q. How have these previous experiences in journalism shaped your role as an executive editor of the Monsoon Journal now?

A. Well having worked for a Tamil newspaper earlier for about almost 30 years, I was able to gather the social aspirations of the Tamil community; the problems of the Tamil community and their interactions with other communities. Everything surrounding the Tamil community was because I worked in a Tamil newspaper. So that was a big advantage in projecting Monsoon Journal as a newspaper that reflects the thoughts, actions, and contributions of the Tamil community.

Q. How do you think the Monsoon Journal can attract a younger audience from the Tamil community?

A. When Logan and I launched the Monsoon Journal, the vision was re-

ally two-fold. One was because it was an English newspaper, we were at an advantage of projecting to other communities the contributions and what was happening in the Tamil community. So, we are able to make note to other communities what is happening in our communities in Canada and the outside world, especially in Sri Lanka. Secondly, as far as the younger generation is concerned, I would say 90% of the younger generation cannot read Tamil, so English is a common language for them, especially in time to come, when they want to know news and views of the Tamil community, an English newspaper would serve a better purpose. Also, the activities of Tamil organizations like the Canadian Tamil Chamber of Commerce, manage to convey what they are doing to other community members as well. Our community is sort of a fog in the wind. The Tamil language news gives much exposure to our community, but for people that cannot read Tamil, they will not know what's happening. It is only through the English newspaper that they, too, can come to know what's happening.

Q. Are there young people writing for the Monsoon Journal?

A. We have a lot of contributions coming from young people as well in a variety of subjects such as health issues and cooking. There are two girls writing on health issues and politics.

Q. Is there a desire to have a young person in a full-time capacity at MJ?

A. If it were a weekly newspaper, then I would say that we would need someone to do full time. Since this is a monthly newspaper, we are not tackling hot news as such. It is not a daily newspaper where news is important, it is actually more so news features, so there is no push for a full-time writer since it is a monthly and not a daily newspaper.

Q. What was a memorable moment in the Monsoon Journal or your career in journalism?

A. It would be interviewing celebrity people, politicians, and people involved in Tamil activities. Interviews were an important aspect of journalism. I also should mention handling press conferences of political parties and politicians.

Q. What advice would you give to individuals aspiring to work in journalism and communications in Canada?

A. Journalism is based on truth. Articles that are written should be based on truth, unlike writing a novel where you don't base it on what happens, but in the case of journalism it must be based on facts and truth. Anyone aspir-

ing to become a journalist should make sure his mind does not run wild. He has to base whatever he writes on truth and what actually happened. There is a difference between news and articles or features. In the case of news, you have to 100% base the piece entirely on facts, but with features it is different. You must always be descriptive and try to express your own comment, but as far as news is concerned, you should not comment. Your comment should only be based on facts. Also try as fast as possible to break news of the latest, not what occurred a few weeks or days before. Whatever is taking place currently should be something attractive to the reader.

Also, in journalism, with news, what attracts the reader is the headline caption. The caption should be very attractive for the reader to read the whole thing. Whatever caption you develop about an event should force him to read the article. Also, whenever you're writing a news story, give some background information as well. For example, yesterday there was the incident that took place in downtown (Toronto), so you can describe what took place in Toronto, but at the same time bring in background on these terrorism activities and issues around the world. Whenever you write a news story based on a complaint of someone, remember that there are always two sides to the same coin. So, you must also get the views of the other party. Say for example, it was some problem with workers. The workers or trade union will come and tell you something, right? But, what they say is not entirely true or factual. You must also ask the employer what the issue is. So, you get both sides of the story, which makes you impartial.

Q. What are your thoughts as to the state of journalism in the United States given the type of presidential administration that is currently taking place there?

A. The thing is to moderate the whole thing and give the views of all sides. It should not be one sided. Yes, there is criticism of Trump for a variety of subjects, but at the same time, he, too, has his own views on some matters. Let me put it this way, the final judgment for what is correct and what is wrong rests with the reader, not the journalist. Your job is to give the information to the reader. You give the facts of the case and give the information related to the subject to allow the reader to judge. The reader is the final judge, not you. That is very important.



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# 2018 Montage Awards:

## Monsoon Journal Interview with Kandiah "Ken" Vivekananthavel of the Canadian Tamils Humanitarian Association (CTHA)

Kandiah "Ken" Vivekananthavel is the CTHA co-coordinator for community relations. Professionally, He is a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) working full-time in the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

Q. What motivating factors led to your founding of the Canadian Tamils Humanitarian Association (CTHA)?

A. I was born and raised in a rural village. I know how difficult the people in my village survive on a day-to-day basis. Most of them were migrant workers, so I know what poor means because I lived with them. Of course, although I did most of my education out of the country in Canada, I knew what was happening back home, the civil war and all those things. So, I waited until the war was ending and once the war ended, I went back to Sri Lanka and visited all the Tamil areas, and I saw the rural and northern places. Most of the places I went to were mostly rural areas, and so I decided that the Western province, Batticaloa, needs the most help. 2015 is when we started our projects. That's how we came about.

Q. What would you consider to be your specific role at the CTHA currently?

A. The CTHA was formed to bring together young people, the new generation, because I know we, the elderly people, are mostly doing the work as we were born there, raised there, and we know the country. However, with my son and the new generation, they have never been there and don't know the country well. I thought I would educate them and give them a chance. In this way, they know what's going and what type of help is needed. That was the motive or reason behind it. All the people in the organization are youngsters like recent graduates, university students, masters students, Grade 12 students or something like that. So, I am trying my best to get them motivated and involved, as once you get involved then of course you take some interest to do it. I give them the freedom in deciding what they want to do and how they want to do it. So pretty much it is a young volunteers organization, even though I am helping or guiding them, it is run entirely by volunteers.

Q. Has the CTHA strengthened the diasporic connections between the Tamil community in Canada and Sri Lanka?



Photo of Ken & Harrish

A. The idea is to send some volunteers also back home to see the sites. Very recently we sent a volunteer, a recent graduate, for seven months back home. He has returned in April after working for about six to seven months. He was full time there helping those in need. We look after three preschools in Batticaloa, its about 120 children. And, also, we are also helping some women's groups, motivating them and giving them some help to start their own businesses. One volunteer was there, and she is back now, where she will tell her friends and the other volunteers what kind of experience she had and how she enjoyed the work. So, our goal is to send volunteers on a regular basis. This way they know what's happening instead of someone coming and telling them "this is what it is." They go there, and we arrange all the accommodations and transportation for them to go there to get that experience and return to Canada.

We are also focusing on the child education because we want to put a foundation since most of rural village children don't go to school. They just go to help with their parents, which is a seasonal thing. If it's a rainy season, they might stay home, otherwise they

will help their parents work the farm, do some fishing, and so now we are encouraging them to attend to school. So, they will have a motivation to continue schooling. Right now, there is a high dropout rate. They do grade 3 and grade 4 and then dropout. We're motivating them and giving them healthy lunches, so this way one more village can come to school. We also do concerts and sports meet. Additionally, we provide shoes, books and uniforms. In our work with women's groups, we very recently gave 22 sewing machines for the young girls or single mothers to make their own living. Another project we're doing is cash crops where in two-to-three years the income will be permanent. This includes helping them with coconut trees, mango trees, cashew plantation, papaya, rum shakes. These are crops that are in demand and be there forever. Instead of giving them a short-term solution they can expand their cultivation.

Q. Is the CTHA looking to expand its projects outside of Batticaloa into other areas in Sri Lanka?

A. No, at this point we want the volunteers to be comfortable. We're focusing on one area because the funding is also very restricted. We just want to

do it properly in one area rather than splitting it into pieces and where the money is not enough. In that sense, whatever we generate we are able to continue and complete the projects.

Q. Have there been any challenges in managing and delivering its humanitarian projects?

A. It's a communication barrier in the villages. They are not used to reporting back. Everyone wants this or that, but there is not much to give because execution of a project can be a tough challenge. For example, the current building, we do not have skilled labour there. They have come and gone or are working somewhere else, so it's very hard to get labour there, skilled labour that is, involved in projects. In making a building, these are special trades that include being a specialist in carpentry, masonry, and roofing. That is lacking because with the war over and people trying to rebuild, there is high demand for skilled labour that CTHA doesn't have. So, with the war's end, we hope to train people in skills development. Aside from that, there are no other major challenges except for funding itself.

There is only a certain amount you can raise as donations so there is a lim-



itation on funding, but we undertake projects according to our needs. We don't take too much and then say "we are stopping this project because there is not enough funding." We do financial planning, see how much we need, intervals based on when we need it, and have been very successful in the past four years as a result. We have done work for about \$200,000 in three years.

Q. How does your organization define and measure success in its projects?

A. It's only the beginning. What we are doing with the preschool children is following them, with our local volunteers to specifically start monitoring their progress from preschool to normal school. And, of course, we will help with their educational needs, but we are not getting involved in everything. We just wanted to follow the children in terms of how they are coming up. It will take sometime. It may take five years to see their overall progress. Other than that, we already see results coming up. Once we see the results in two to three years we can see the changes coming. That is another area focused on. People are happy, and we can see the changes.

Q. Has the current post-war environment in Sri Lanka at all influence the type of humanitarian work that the CTHA has facilitated?

A. Most of the people in where we are working, during the struggle, most of the youngsters have gone to

war. They have either died or gotten injured. There are more women than men right now. There are only single mothers living there with small children, so survival is tough. The war has really affected them. It is still in their memories and we are not doing counselling, but that may become an area we look at in the future along with motivation for the future. We want to help them focus more so on the future than the past, as the past is the past.

Q. Aside from counselling, are there any other projects or work that this organization will be undertaking in 2018-19?

A. Right now, we just want to work with what we have. As of today, we have three preschools, but by next year we are going to take another four preschools. We will thereby be helping with seven preschools, which is about 300 children. That is quite a bit for us to oversee and also undertake skills training and plantations. We don't want to get involved in anything where we cannot manage or there may be a limitation in financing, so we'll see. We are just balancing the budget and going. Although, if there is a budget surplus, it will go into any other project. However, at this point, we desire to stay within our means because that's the success, right? Do what you can, so this way it can continue and does not frustrate any participants, as the volunteers may be frustrated by money

issues.

So far, we have not really struggled when it came to financing, we always had money whenever it was needed. We don't spend our money here, where we get it from a printing fee and things like that. However, our major sources of funding have been from doing breakfast fundraising, cultural shows from the volunteers, clothing drives, as well as Mother's Day events, to send back home.

Q. What advice would you give to the Tamil community in Canada and elsewhere outside of Sri Lanka to give back to the country or pursue a career in international development?

A. My advice would be with CTHA adopting a village and taking responsibility to care for some 500 people in the area, I would like various groups to take another village. This way in five to ten years maybe, not five, I would say in ten years they are self-sufficient and can do their own thing. Right now, there are so many villages that need help, so that's the advice I would say. Go and have a look at it, choose a village, and make sure you have a proper person to execute whatever you want to do. That's the main thing. The success comes from whoever you have on the other side because if they mess up things, it is not going to work out. You have to find the right people as there are some interlopers who see the money and go, don't deliver a proper job and no communication. You have to ensure that you can setup a team of people that can execute a project according to the way you instructed.

That's the thing. You can give money, but you have to ensure that the money is spent properly and goes to the right people. You can't just suddenly pick up the phone and offer money and not know what it is.

I pretty much go to Sri Lanka once every year. Although I have gone twice these past three years. However, I can't afford to go there all the time, but my plan is that I will go there once a year to see what is happening. Also, our plan is to send volunteers to live there and get a chance to live with the people; talk to the people and see how we can improve

their lives.

Q. So regarding this concern over embezzlement of money by someone managing the project, is there some board of directors or enforcement mechanism to prevent these offenses?

A. Well what CTHA has done is we have a bank account in Toronto. We also have setup a separate bank account for CTHA in Sri Lanka. All the money we sent there is to this specific bank account, no one else's money goes there, and we can see if there is a disbursement. We monitor it very vigorously. That's how we manage it. We want to setup an organization there, but it is costly, so it is on hold at this point. We have a bank account where the money is well accounted for. Also, right now, we are getting the local government officials in Sri Lanka to join with us as partners, so this way they will oversee the money we spend on the preschool and parents. Starting next year, the money will be sent to the association where the parents are on the board and the government officials would ensure money is well spent as caretakers.

Q. Personally, what have you enjoyed about the work in the CTHA?

A. For myself, I am happy that I am helping the poor, which I enjoy more than my regular work. Helping people and bringing volunteers is at least the legacy I am going to leave behind. I have allowed younger people to do things on their own to allow them to see what is happening. I am helping pre-school children learn and continue to have an education. That's the satisfaction I get.

It is not something like I did today or yesterday. It has been something coming from my childhood because I am from a rural village. Fortunately, we were doing okay, and I used to only help people in whatever way I could. After I came to Canada when the war was on, I was helping the hospitals here through walkathons, fundraisers, and other work that went together Scarborough General or Stouffville General Hospital. So, we waited for a chance until the war to end. After the war, we started our work.



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# THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesh Temple

Compiled by Kidambi Raj, Life Member of the Temple



Community Watch



Hindu Temple  
Richmond Hill

## Cultural and Community Engagements at the Temple

### History of the Temple

In the late sixties, the need for community worship and hence a temple was strongly felt among people of Sri Lankan / South Indian origin, who had migrated from different parts of the world. The Hindu Temple Society of Canada was chartered in 1973 as a non-profit religious institution, with about 10 trustees, with the objective of building and maintaining a temple, following the Agama Sastras. With the surge in the immigration of large Hindu community in the eighties, land was bought in Richmond Hill. The site was consecrated in October 1983 and the ardent task of building a temple began, with the installation and consecration of Lord Ganesh at a temporary altar in 1984, which was later moved to a pre-fabricated building. It should be pointed out that for the first time, a Hindu Temple was built entirely through 'Kar-Seva' (volunteer labor) of men, women and children.

In 1987-88, the main complex was designed and the construction commenced with lots of volunteers supporting the project, which resulted in significant cost reduction. The services in the main temple started with the installation of Lord Muruga in his present abode, on 2nd July 1988.

The overall design was done by the well known Mr. V. Janakiramana Sthapathi, who hails from the same architect family that built the famous Big Temple in Tanjavur in South India during 9th to 13th century period. He had designed and lped build the Temple with his team of sculptors, with consultations and advice from many religious experts and leaders including the Senior Sankaracharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam. The beauty and the greatness of the fine artwork are beyond description and can be appreciated only by a personal visit and experience.

In 1992, two vimanas (Altar Towers) were built on top of the altars of Lord Muruga and Lord Venkateswara and a 'Vimana Kumbabishekam' was performed in late 1992. The construction concluded with the Maha Kumbabishekam on August 30, 2001.

The temple crossed yet another landmark on April 7th, 2002 when all 12 Azhwaars as well as Ramanuja were installed and consecrated in the temple, and thus became the first temple in North America to do so.

The Temple complex is said to be the largest Hindu Temple in North America built and run under the Agama Sastra traditions as specified in the scriptures. Additionally, the Muruga Vighraha or idol is said to be the tallest Muruga idol in the world! Various festivals are being celebrated in the temple almost 200 days a year. There are six full time highly qualified priests engaged in the temple currently, in addition to a Manager and several other permanent staff. The temple is managed by an efficient board of Trustees, comprising people of various walks of life and professions.

From its humble beginnings, the Richmond Hill temple has made a conscious effort to become an active member of the community, in addition to being a spiritual leader for the thousands of Hindus in the region. The temple has hosted and been involved in numerous cultural, social, youth and greater community events. In fact, the very first event organized by the temple, well before the temple structures took shape, was a fund-raising event featuring India's greatest singer, Smt. M.S. Subbalakshmi. In the early years, well-known artistes and speakers have given programs at the temple, prominent among them, Sri Thirumuruga Kirupananda Variar. While the temple's engagements and initiatives have been numerous, an attempt has been made here to highlight some of the more recent community engagement events.

1. The Heritage Council of the Town of Richmond Hill contacted the Temple to join fourteen other centres to be part of Doors Open Richmond Hill initiative in 2015. Since then our Temple has been participating in Doors Open event. We have welcomed everyone with open arms and the number of visitors during these events has been phenomenal. In the first year, the number of visitors we received was more than double that in other centres, as confirmed by volunteers sent by the Heritage Council to monitor the attendance. These events have been an eye opener to the community at-large. Since our participation in Doors Open event, the number of requests for touring the temple has been on the increase. During this event, we present a taste of South Indian Classical Bharatanatyam Dance, Yoga and Meditation demonstrations and also applying Mehndi/Henna to the visitors. Needless to say, this has been a great hit with the visitors.

2. The taste of Hindu culture presented during the Doors Open events has made our Temple as a provider of Bharatanatyam performance and providing the Mehndi/Henna application to visitors at the Annual Summer BBQs for politicians at all levels. In short, presenting these Hindu cultural activities has become synonymous with our temple for the Richmond Hill Community.

3. The Grade XI Catholic School Students have a mandatory course called "World Religion", where they have to learn the very basics of all the Religions that are being followed in the Province and during that academic year they have to visit the places of worship of other faith at least once. During each academic year we welcome about 20 to 25 school visits. The students are not only given a tour of the temple, but also provided with the Basics on Hinduism. This really serves to enable the students to understand the diversity amongst the community at-large.

4. Once a year, the York Region Police from the



"diversity, Equity & Inclusion Bureau" comprising of about 15 to 20 Police Officers and about 15 to 20 Civilian employees of all ethnic background working in various Police Stations visit our temple for a tour and to hear a brief talk explaining the Basics of Hinduism to sensitize them of the diversity.

5. During the Navaratri festival (September-October), every one of the nine evenings the temple arranges various cultural and musical events which include Vocal music, various musical instrument performances and South Indian Traditional Bharatanatyam performances, all by the younger generation this Indian & Sri Lankan community.

6. Yoga Classes held at the Priests Quarters adjacent to the temple every week.

7. Dance classes are held at the Priests Quarters

8. Instrument music classes are also held

9. After the main Deities were installed, Pulavar Keeran from South India was invited to give a Discourse for Five Days on Hindu Epic "Ramayana" the first year and the following year he gave a 5-Day discourse on another Epic "Mahabharatam". All to give an insight to the Hindus here in Canada about the Rich Heritage of Hinduism.

10. Since May 2015, I have undertaken to write an article every month in the publication "Monsoon Journal" on activities at the temple. This has provided readers of the publication a regular update about the temple and consequently given the temple considerable exposure.

### The Hindu Temple Society of Canada

## Richmond Hill Hindu Temple

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## Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar - Man of Revolution

By: Kanimozhi MV, New Jersey, USA



Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar

The man who was treated ill because he was born in so called low caste becomes the Man who shaped the constitution of India. He was able to attain his achievements only through his hard work in spite of embarrassment he faced all through his life. Nothing could stop him achieving his pinnacle of success. He researched about this Indian subcontinent and its peculiar characteristic feature caste and said that in India caste makes a man to disrespect his fellow human and this caste is the product of Hinduism. As everyone says Hinduism is not a religion but a disease says Dr. Ambedkar.

In the year 1955 Ambedkar speaks about M.K. Gandhi and his Poona Pact in BBC Radio, where he shares the double image played by Gandhi. Gandhi was conducting two newspapers. One was Harijans in English and other was Gujarati Magazine. In English Magazine he was posing himself as opponent of Caste system, and in Gujarati magazine one could read his orthodox thoughts and support of Varanashrama system. Dr. Ambedkar says the west world is deceived by reading just his English newspaper run by him.

After BJP came to power in 2014, India has been experiencing killing of Dalits and Muslims on daily basis and sometimes for the reason they had consumed beef or possessed beef meat. When we read Ambedkar book "The Untouchables: Who Were They and Why They Became Untouchables?" he clearly mentions why did Brahmins who were eating beef culturally stopped eating beef?

He says it was a cultural shift Brahmins made to fight against the Buddhism and to remove Buddhist Principles from the minds of people. History says only during Gupta period, The Golden Age for Brahmins, the killing of cow was made a punishment by law.

Every aspect of Indian subcontinent he researched and tried to find out why people were treated so mean? He complained that Indian society is a Pyramidal structure and no two castes are equal. You can change your religion but not your caste. You are born as a Brahmin and you remain a Brahmin and enjoy the caste privilege all through the life. Person born as Mahar or Paraiyah continues to live a socially forced low life till their death.

As Ambedkar rightly says, "Untouchability shuts all doors of opportunities for betterment in life for Untouchables. It does not offer an Untouchable any opportunity to move freely in society; it compels him to live in dungeons and seclusion; it prevents him from educating himself and following a profession of his choice"

As a solution Dr. Ambedkar says, only way to fight against caste and untouchability is to agitate and abolish slavery, because Untouchability is the product of Caste.

He says that change does not happen by begging but only with ruthless agitations. "You must abolish your slavery yourselves. Do not depend for its abolition upon god or a superman. Remember that it is not enough that a people are numerically in the majority. They must be always watchful, strong and self-respecting to attain and maintain success. We must shape our course ourselves and by ourselves" emphasis Dr. Ambedkar

Ambedkar also asks his followers to educate, agitate and organize; have faith in yourself. With justice on our side I do not see how we can lose our battle. The battle to me is a matter of joy. The battle is in the fullest sense spiritual. There is nothing material or social in it. For ours is a battle not for wealth or for power. It is battle for freedom. It is the battle of reclamation of human personality stresses Ambedkar.

All through his life he questioned the caste in Hinduism and Hindu gods. But today the RSS has come up with an agenda Hindutva Ambedkar and wanted Ramji to be added to the name of Ambedkar. Before adding Ramji to Ambedkar's name they must also know what Dr. Ambedkar said about Rama in his book "Riddles in Hinduism". He says that Rama was not a teetotaler and he was not a good king too. He exposes how Rama killed a shudra Sambhugan because his penance was the cause of death of a Brahmin boy. This shows that Rama Rajya that which is expected to be made in India is nothing but Brahmin Rajya and making sudras and Panchamas slaves for Brahmins.

When we turn the pages of history, we know that women treated below the panchamas. They were not allowed to read or work or to practice spirituality. Dr. Ambedkar broke these chains of slavery for women. In one of the historic conference for women held on 20 July 1942 at Nagpur. Some 25,000 dalit women participated in the conference. In his speech in the conference he told the women to be progressive and to abolish traditionalism, ritualism and customary habits, which were detrimental to their progress. He also advised them not to indulge in early marriages.

If not Ambedkar headed the drafting committee of Indian Constitution, it is impossible to think if the socially backward and downtrodden and women could have achieved anything in today's modern India. On his 127th Birthday let us follow his footsteps and try to be more proactive and try to maintain Secularism in this country.

## Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple Congregation pay Tribute to Toronto van attack victims

The devotees of the Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple held a Special Worship session on Friday, April 27th evening in memory of the victims of the van attack that killed ten innocent people and injured fifteen others in the city's suburb of North York.

This was attended by the MP for Richmond Hill, Hon. Majid Jowhari, the Mayor of the Town of Richmond Hill, Mr. Dave Barrow and Ward 3 councillor Mr. Castro Liu and Ward 2 Councillor Mr. Tom Muench.

Those present stated that their thoughts and prayers were with the victims, their families and all those affected by this cruel act all over the nation. Special appreciation of the great

work done by the first responders and the by the very gallant act performed by the Toronto Police, Officer, Mr. Ken Lam, a seven-year veteran, in arresting the killer without firing even single shot.

Devotees held lamps (Moksha Deepams or Lamps to pray for salvation) so that the souls of the dead people would all rest in peace and attain salvation. They also prayed to Lord Almighty to give the family and friends of those who lost their loved ones, the strength to bear the irreplaceable loss and speedy recovery to normal health to those recovering from their injuries.

Mr. Samy Appadurai, TV & Radio Producer covered this event.





# WATERLOO - GUELPH TAMIL NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

**Waterloo:** Local Sri Lankan and South Indian Tamil community celebrated the annual New Year celebration. The spirit of Waterloo Region and Guelph community were high on the 28th of April at Lutheran Community Hall in Waterloo. The colourful event was indeed a success.

The celebrations commenced with Thamil Thai Valthu and Canadian National Anthem. The president of Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region, Mr. Ragu Sivaramakrishnan welcomed the guests and thanked for their support in promoting Tamil arts, culture

and language in the region of Waterloo and Guelph. The Secretary Mr. Dennis Loyola inaugurated the AGM and read the annual report. It was followed by a group presentation from the students of Tamil language school, Cambridge. They explained the significance of Tamil New year, culture and its traditions. Local artists from the community performed Music, dance and speech. The event was filled with cultural performances. A large number of guests' attended the event. It came to a close with dinner.





# CLOTH DRIVE BY CFLI INTERACT CLUB FOR CTHA PROJECTS



Centre for Leadership and Innovation Interact Club (CFLI Interact Club) did a cloth drive in collaboration with Canadian Tamils Humanitarian Association on March 25th to collect new, lightly used cloths, toys and children books. The clothing drive started at 1 pm at Milliken Mills High School in Markham. By 4 pm we were able to collect 50 boxes in total. These items will be sent to the needy people in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka by August 2018 and will be distributed by Rotary Club of Batticaloa.

CFLI Interact club consist of members who graduated from the Youth Leadership Program (YLP) conducted by Centre for Leadership and Innovation and a youth wing of Richmond Hill Rotary club.

CTHA aims to help develop and strengthen currently impoverished Tamil communities back home, while engaging with the Tamil Diaspora. CTHA has partnered with Jarvis Soccer Sports Club and Durham Tamil Association to organize two more cloth drives to collect another 130 boxes to fill half container. Please follow us on the Facebook for further details about the cloth drive and other current projects.

[cthacanada.org](http://cthacanada.org)

[cthacanada@gmail.com](mailto:cthacanada@gmail.com)

fb: Canadian Tamils Humanitarian Association





# YMCA Honours GCE AL Student with Best Performance Awards

The third annual Best performance award Recipients have been selected and the presentation ceremony will be held in July. This year special awards for two Best all rounder scholars (male/female) considering sports and leadership from those who have passed the AL exam will be awarded.

This year Two Tri-lingual excellence awards (male/female) to encourage learning three languages will be awarded from those who have passed GCE OL from NP and under 30 years and with ability to read and speak

three languages.

To encourage Teachers serving in difficult areas Arumuganavalar award and cash 50,000 will be given to a teacher who has served long years and retired in 2017.

The awards are sponsored by Direct Family Financial Support Canada with media sponsorship from Monsoon Journal, Canada. The winners will receive Shield and cash awards from Rs 25,000 to 50,000

**Francis Master**

### Arumuganavalar Award

A Teacher (Maths, Science, Tamil or English) who Served in a difficult area and retired with longest service in 2017  
Cash grant Rs 50,000/=

### C. Y. Thamotherampillai Award and William Twynum Award

Best All Round Scholar (Male/Female)  
Selection from students who have entered University based on 2017 AL and excelled in sports and leadership  
Cash grant Rs 35,000/=

### Poobalasingam Debate Shield

Inter School Debate  
Each Participant will receive a voucher for Rs 5000/=

### Veeramamunivar Award and Ranganathan Sivanesan Award

Tri-lingual Excellence Award (Male/Female)  
Selection will be from applicants who are under 30 years in 2017, sat for O/L from a school in NP and can read and speak Three languages  
Cash award Rs 25,000/=

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	<p><b>S.K. Sandrasegeran Award</b> Maths Stream - First Rank <b>Mr Sritharan Thuvakaran</b> J/Hartley College <i>Gift of Mrs Rajes Sandrasegeran</i></p>	
	<p><b>Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Award</b> Maths Stream - Second Rank <b>Mr R.D. Jeyarajan Paul Janson</b> J/ St.Patrick's College <i>Gift of Dr C. Kirupananthan and Dr S. Sauchiyadevan</i></p>	
	<p><b>Kamaladevi Ramalingam Award</b> Commerce Stream- First Rank <b>Miss Saranga Vijayakumar</b> J /Kokuvil Hindu College <i>Gift of Mr Sivanesan Thulasidas</i></p>	
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