

Monsoon

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Journal

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Ontario Provincial Elections

The Battle for the Ballot

Ontarians go to the polls on June 7th to elect a new Government



Doug Ford
Ontario PC Leader



Kathleen Wynne
Ontario Liberal Leader



Andrea Horwath
Ontario NDP Leader

By Siva Sivapragasam

A close battle is expected at the forthcoming Ontario provincial elections scheduled for June 7th with all

three major parties fighting for the ballot to form a new government. Among the major issues fiercely debated at campaign meetings revolve around the economy, taxation, health issues, Hydro

rates, housing availability, Transit and infrastructure, dental care for low income seniors, child care, hospital wait times and auto insurance rates.

Kathleen Wynne and the governing Liberals are campaigning on the record of their 15 years in office and a budget plan that calls for a massive expansion of government spending and deficits.

Andrea Horwath is taking the Ontario NDP into her third election as party leader by presenting the NDP as the real progressive choice for voters.

Meanwhile, Doug Ford, the newly-

minted head of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party hopes to harness taxpayer outrage to propel his party to victory. The Liberals have pledged increases to social services, health-care, and childcare while PC party is campaigning on a promise to quickly balance the books and promising cuts to the budget. The NDP is projecting multi-year deficits with its heavy investment in health and social services.

June 7th will be a testing time for the Ontario voters to decide who will govern them once the election is over.

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Montage Awards 2018

Monsoon Journal celebrates 12th Anniversary

By: Krishni Narine

Toronto, ON, Canada - On Sunday May 6th, 2018 at the Scarborough Civic Centre the 12th Anniversary for Monsoon Journal was celebrated, along with recognizing South Asian Heritage Month. The Monsoon Journal team, advertisers, community members and supporters all joined together to celebrate the milestones the publication has reached and recognized individuals of the Monsoon Journal editorial team.

The afternoon began with an opportunity for guests to network before the formal proceedings. Hosted by Rajini Nathan who also contributed regularly

to the publication; she introduced key sponsors to present awards to the editorial team. A special award was given to Mr. Siva Sivapragasam, executive editor of the Monsoon Journal for his tireless effort and maintaining the high standard of content through his rich background in journalism.

Monsoon Journal recognizes individuals carrying out charitable and social work and presented the humanitarian award to Ken Vivekananthavel for all of his philanthropic contributions to building a better community in Sri Lanka.

The guest of honour and keynote speaker was Ms. Thulasi Muttulingam,

a journalist based in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, where she concentrates on writing on social issues in post-war Sri Lanka. The guests listened in silence as she shared the struggles that journalists faced in Sri Lanka and how difficult it was to represent the true stories of the people living there. Realizing how important her role was, put our lives in the Western part of the world into perspective, where news coverage is minutes after an incident happens and journalists are not afraid to report on controversial topics. Attendees were left to reflect on Thulasi's speech and empowered to share her story.

Hon. Gary Anandasangaree MP, parliamentarian for Scarborough-Rouge Park represented the Government of Canada at the event. The Member of Parliament delivered congratulatory messages to Monsoon Journal, Ms. Thulasi Muttulingam, Mr. Siva Sivapragasam, and all other award recipients and also extended greetings to the attendees and all read-

ers of Monsoon Journal, on behalf of the Prime Minister of Canada.

Premier of Ontario, Hon Kathleen Wynne had also extended her wishes to the event, Monsoon Journal and readers via a statement.

The loyal readership continues to grow and is an integral part of the publication. The Monsoon Journal team would like to congratulate all of the award winners and the entire editorial team for 12 continuous years. The MJ team would also like to thank Thulasi Muttulingam for journeying all the way from Sri Lanka and all those in attendance at the 12th Anniversary.

Please see pages 6 to 10 for more coverage on Montage Awards 2018.



Happy Canada Day
July 1, 2018

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Ontario Liberals: Platform Continues To Build a Fairer, Better, More Affordable Ontario

ONTARIO — May 26: The Ontario Liberals released their full election platform today, introducing new actions that a re-elected Liberal government will take to build on the plan for care and opportunity presented in the 2018 Budget.

As an anchor to these new plans and to support ongoing fiscal sustainability, the Ontario Liberal platform includes a commitment to introduce legislation that will lower Ontario's debt. When Ontario beats its own fiscal projections, as we have done in each of the last four years, this legislation will require 100 per cent of those unspent dollars to go towards reducing the debt.

In 2014, Ontario Liberals were elected to build Ontario up. After four years of doing just that, and achieving the best streak of economic growth since the 1990s, new actions in the Ontario Liberal platform that build on the plan for care and opportunity will:

- Continue the fight for a fair and affordable housing market by:

- *Tightening rental market rules to stop unfair renovations

- *Curbing the use of inappropriate above-guideline rent increases due to capital repairs

- *Prohibiting above-guideline rent increases in buildings with outstanding work orders related to pest control

- Continue to help more workers have the retirement security they deserve by:

- *Supporting the creation of portable pension plans that stay with a worker from one job to the next

- *Removing barriers that prevent existing successful private and public sector pension plans from offering their services to more people, so that all workers can join a strong, secure workplace pension plan

- Standing up for retirees to get them the benefits they were promised, even in the event of a bankruptcy

- *Step up environmental protections to keep our air and water clean and our people healthy by:

- *Expanding the Greenbelt

- *Prioritizing every community's right to water by making the moratorium on new or expanded water bottling permanent, provided, by the end of 2018, this approach is supported by science

- *Requiring that 85 per cent of all single-use plastic bottles be recycled

- *Requiring online and on-label disclosure of toxic substances and chemicals in

key consumer products, such as household cleaning products, baby products and cosmetics, starting in 2020

- Continue to make life more affordable by:

- *Eliminating geographic discrimination in auto insurance

- *Reducing transit fares for most trips that transfer between municipal transit systems and reducing GO train fares within the City of Toronto and on most trips along the Lakeshore East and West Lines

- *Creating an independent gasoline watchdog to protect consumers and ensure fair pricing across Ontario

The new actions outlined in the Ontario Liberal platform are supported by the fiscal plan presented in the 2018 Budget and do not add any new costs. They build on the plan for care and opportunity that expands publicly funded prescription drugs to one-in-two people in Ontario, builds a record amount of transit, boosts hospital funding, makes the largest mental health investment in Canadian history, helps more people go to college or university with publicly funded tuition and lets more parents go back to work by funding preschool child care from 2 ½ to kindergarten.

By listening to people's needs and choosing to invest in care and opportunity, Ontario Liberals will run a modest deficit of less than one per cent of GDP and have charted a responsible path back to balance. To support ongoing fiscal sustainability, the Ontario Liberal platform includes a commitment to introduce legislation that will tackle Ontario's debt. When Ontario beats its own fiscal projections, as we have done in each of the last four years, this legislation will require 100 per cent of those unspent dollars to go towards reducing the debt.

Doug Ford has not presented a coherent or costed fiscal plan — or any plan. His series of one-off spending and revenue reduction announcements will do nothing to help every day families get ahead and add up to billions in cuts to our schools, hospitals and transit projects. Ontario's economy is growing stronger and cleaner, but that growth and the care and services it funds are at risk this election. The NDP Platform is riddled with errors and job-killing taxes on business. They still have not fixed the mistake pointed out to them nearly two weeks ago — where they accidentally wiped out billions in programs they supposedly support.

- ontarioliberal.ca

Doug Ford will reduce taxes, hydro bills and gas prices

May 25: The Ontario PC Party is the only party that will respect people by lowering their tax and hydro bills and reduce the price of gas at the pump. Ontario PC Leader Doug Ford today contrasted the Ontario PC plan with the high-tax, high-hydro rate, high-gas price agenda of the NDP.

"For 15 years, the Liberals have been partying with the taxpayers money and the NDP want to keep the party going, just with a different tune," said Ford. "An NDP Government is just like a Kathleen Wynne Government. The only change, is that a different group of insiders and special interests get rich. But today I'm putting the special interests on notice — under an Ontario PC Government — the party with the taxpayers' dollars is over."

Ford shared that an Ontario PC Government will cut gas prices by 10 cents per litre, saving the average driver \$222 per year. An Ontario PC Government will reduce hydro bills by 12 per cent, saving the average household \$173 per year. An Ontario PC Government will also introduce a refundable child care tax credit that will save parents up to \$6,750 per child, a minimum wage tax credit that will save low income workers as much as \$850 per year, and a middle-class tax cut that will save middle-

income earners up to \$786 per year.

"Under an NDP government — you will be paying over \$2.00 per litre for gas by next summer, because shutting down fossil fuels like gasoline is part of their real NDP agenda. They have already been caught promising to drive up hydro bills by \$600 million as part of a plan to shut down the Pickering nuclear power plant, and their plan to increase taxes by \$20 billion will drive more businesses and more jobs out of Ontario. And even after increasing the price of everything, the NDP still could not get their own math right and they will need to find another \$7 billion in new taxes to pay for their spending."

"We're the only party that will bring your taxes down, bring your gas prices down and bring your hydro bills down," Ford concluded. "We will deliver real relief. We will put more money in your pocket. Change is coming and help is on the way."

- ontariopc.ca



Horwath will convert student loans to grants, forgive interest on student loans

NORTH YORK — May 23: Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath laid out her commitment Wednesday to turn all OSAP student loans into unrepayable grants, and to stop the government from profiting off students by ending interest payments.

That change will be retroactive to students with outstanding loans who have already paid interest to the province, Horwath told students at Seneca college.

"We have incredible colleges and universities in Ontario, and young people should be leaving these colleges with a bright future ahead of them — not a mountain of debt repayment ahead of them," said Horwath. "People are taking on thousands of dollars in student loans. It's keeping graduates living in mom and dad's home longer. The crushing debt is even preventing young people from starting their own family."

"It really doesn't have to be this way."

The Wynne Liberals have underfunded our colleges and universities for 15 years, so Ontario's students pay the highest tuition in Canada.

Doug Ford's promise to cut over \$6 bil-

lion will make the situation much worse. His deep cuts would make life less affordable for students and graduates, and it would put universities and colleges even deeper in the hole. And his promise to 'leave no stone unturned' when it comes to privatization puts all public education at risk.

"The reality is that students who graduated 15 years ago when the Liberals came to office may still be in debt today," said Horwath. "That holds them back, and it holds Ontario back. So let's do something about it. Let's make their lives more affordable."

- ontariondp.ca



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Public Service Day: Being a Great Public Servant like Leslie Knope

On June 23, 2018, the globe shall recognize the United Nations Public Service Day. It originated in 2003 where it was designated in resolution 57/277 of the UN General Assembly. According to the United Nations, the purpose of this day of observance is to celebrate the value and virtue of public service to the community. It lauds the many contributions that public service has made to development processes across the globe. At the same time, it recognizes the work that the public servants are committed to everyday. As I have quickly learned, it is presented as a source of inspiration for young people like myself to pursue careers in the public sector. I, as a budding public servant, see it as a needed source of motivation to pursue its permanent career.

One distinctive way this day of observance is commemorated is through Public Service Awards. The UN has noted that 250 of the 4000 initiatives submitted for this honour have received awards for projects in several broad areas of human development such as early assessment of children with special needs, skills development investments, and promotion of gender equality.

The 2018 awards are scheduled to be held from June 21-23 in Marrakesh, the Kingdom of Morocco, illustrated through a theme of "Transforming governance to realize the Sustainable Development Goals." These refer to the high-level goals that build off the accomplishments from the Millennium Development Goals, focusing on areas including climate change, peace and justice and economic inequality. As for governance, it is about promoting an appreciation for innovation in the design and delivery of public services across the globe including right here in Ontario and the rest of Canada.

A few of the winners from 2017 were the Governments of West Bengal in India and Great Britain. The first involved a conditional cash transfer initiative that helped improve the mobility of adolescent girls avoid child marriage and obtain a high-quality education. The second was concerned with the matter of senior fraud, offering a volunteer-run safeguard services to reduce the number of seniors encountering financial abuse by 56%.

In 2009, the Government of Ontario achieved recognition by the UN Public Service Awards as



well in delivering high-quality French language services to Ontario's Francophone community.

For most young individuals contemplating their future careers, one should consider these two wise quotes from Stefania Senese, Governance and Public Administration Officer in UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Public Administration and Development Management, on the uniqueness of public service.

"A great public servant is someone who listens to the views of different people, tries to understand their needs and works tirelessly towards enhancing their lives. They are motivated and resilient and demonstrate an inclusive attitude. A great public servant is never afraid to innovate and change."

"Their profession is, by its very nature, public, which means they work for everyone, especially for the poorest and the most vulnerable. That is why some people refer to public service as a vocation rather than a profession or occupation."

This is a sentiment that I will work to bring to my summer job in public servant in the Government of Ontario and as my vocation.

Don't rule out the possibility of being your own Leslie Knope, a great public servant from the fictional town of Pawnee, Indiana and main character of the on my favorite television series of, Parks and Recreation.

Contributed by: Harrish Thirukumaran

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Canada Historic Milestones: JUNE

June 4, 1979

Flora MacDonald becomes the first woman to be appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Born in Nova Scotia, Flora MacDonald lived an interesting life before and after her political career. In 1976, she ran unsuccessfully against Joe Clark for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party. Their rivalry is the subject of the National Film Board documentary "Flora: Scenes from a Leadership Convention." She worked with and for prime ministers Diefenbaker, Clark and Mulroney.



Ontario Provincial General Election - June 7, 2018

Canadian citizens who reside in Ontario, and are at least 18 years of age on election day, are eligible to vote. To be added to the Voters List, electors can go to our website to easily confirm, add or update their information using our e-Registration system. A detailed list of acceptable identification documents is available on the Elections Ontario Website.

Advance voting will be available from May 26 to May 30, from 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. at area advance voting locations in electoral districts, and from May 26 to June 1, from 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. in returning offices.

Election Day is June 7, 2018. Polls will be open from 9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. (Eastern Time).

**Monsoon Journal wishes
Readers, Advertisers, Friends
and Well-wishers a
Happy Father's Day
June 17, 2018**

"He who rejects change is the architect of decay" - Harold Wilson (11 March 1916 – 24 May 1995) Former Prime Minister of Britain

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Prime Minister Justin Trudeau calls upon the government of Sri Lanka to establish a process of accountability

Ottawa, Ontario - May 18, 2018

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement on the ninth anniversary of the end of the war in Sri Lanka:

"Today, we mark the ninth anniversary of the end of the war in Sri Lanka. The war – which lasted over 26 years – resulted in immeasurable injuries, loss of life, and displacement. The wounds of this war linger as the survivors seek answers for their loss, including family members and loved ones who have disappeared.

"Over the past nine years, I have met many Tamil-Canadians personally affected by the war. Their stories are a solemn reminder of the need to attain lasting peace and true reconciliation.

"I reiterate my call to the Government of Sri Lanka to establish a process of accountability that has the trust and confidence of the survivors. Canada offers its full support to the Government of Sri Lanka and those working to ensure that efforts towards



reconciliation, non-recurrence, peace, and justice on the island are realized, and that international and domestic commitments on accountability, transitional justice, and ending impunity are met.

"On this anniversary, I extend my deepest sympathy to Canadians of Tamil descent, and all victims of the armed conflict and their families. I also invite all Canadians to take time to recognize the important contributions that Tamil-Canadians make to our country and the adversity they have overcome."

JUANITA NATHAN



Juanita Nathan is a long-time resident of Markham and someone has dedicated her life to helping the most vulnerable in our society.

Whether it's helping students get their life on track and back into school or helping women cope with abuse, or ensuring that seniors are active and informed about their health; Juanita plays an instrumental role in the lives of many individuals and families.

Her record on community involvement and grass roots engagement is exceptional. She received the Queen Elizabeth the II Diamond Jubilee medal for her volunteer work.

Juanita's strong desire to help young people, women, and seniors overcome obstacles and challenges put her on her path to get involved in the community and pursue a career in the social services sector. She now looks to bring her grass root experience to Queen's Park and ensure progress continues to be made. She is a long-time



community activist, and has been involved with organizations such as the York Simcoe Canadian Mental Health Services, York Region Equity Council, the Markham Tamil Organization and Family Services of York Region.

Juanita is currently a trustee from Markham, the vice-chair for the York Region District School Board, a parent-student support worker, and a counselor for abused women.

For more information, visit www.juanitanathan.ca.

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Montage Awards 2018 May 6, 2018

Exemplary contributions in Journalism & Management of Media Organizations

Siva Sivapragasam Executive Editor Presented by Mohan Sundaramohan, RBC



Siva Sivapragasam is a Media Professional who received his high school education at the prestigious Royal College, a premier educational institution in Sri Lanka. He later graduated from the University of Sri Lanka with an Economics Honours Degree. His interest and passion for Journalism made him join Lake House, the largest Newspaper group in Sri Lanka. At Lake House he worked for the Daily News, the premier English Daily in Sri Lanka in the capacity of Finance Editor for the newspaper. Later he joined the Virakesari Group of Newspapers and functioned as the Secretary and the Marketing Manager for the Virakesari Group for more than 30 years.

Since his arrival in Canada, Mr. Sivapragasam has continued his Media work and was managing "Thamilar Mathiyil", the Tamil Business & Information Directory. He was also a Director of the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce, handling the Publishing work for the Chamber. He was functioning as the Editor of the Chamber's annual Souvenir titled "Enterprise". The highlight of Siva's journalistic contribution was the article on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi titled "The beginning of the Modi Era" and selected as Chapter one in the book "Modi's Blueprint for India" published by Pentagon Press, New Delhi.

He is currently the Executive Editor of "Monsoon Journal".

Mr. Sivapragasam possesses over 50 years of Media experience.

Exemplary contributions in Humanitarian Services

Ken Vivekananthavel, CPA, CMA Presented by Kula Sellathurai, Inter-Citi



Born in Karanavai, Sri Lanka, had education at Udupiddy American Mission College, Nelliady Central College and Hartley College.

After A/L, Ken chose to study in the field of Accounting.

At the age of 22, Ken joined Walker Sons Ltd as a cost accounting trainee and there after worked as senior accountant at Yahala Group of companies and Translanka Ltd in Colombo.

In 1984, Ken came to Canada and worked for GE Canada, Epson Canada, and Unilever Canada as accountant. In 1988 he joined as an auditor with Ministry of Finance and currently working with Government of Canada.

Ken worked with several charities and raised funds for Scarborough Hospital Foundation, Centenary Hospital Foundation, Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation, United way Canada, Nalanda Way in Tamil Nadu India, Ahambumika, Bhopal India.

About three years ago, his passion in charity work made him to freshly form an organization called Canadian Tamil's Humanitarian Association so that he can carry out many special projects to help the needy. He also trained young volunteers to empower women and children in rural villages of Batticaloa.

In three years CTHA helped to complete projects worth \$200,000.

One of the major achievement was partnering with Rotary club of Richmond Hill, an adopt a village project worth \$68,000 for water and sanitation project in a village called Pavatkodichchenai. Total project cost \$150,000 and the balance \$82,000 from CTHA supporters. Current project is to build a pre School at Kathiravelli in Batticaloa at a cost of \$15,000 and 100 cataract surgeries for 100 patients in Batticaloa at a cost of \$15,000.

Exemplary contributions in Journalism

Thulasi Muttulingam Presented by Lawyer Dilani Gunarajah, President - CTCC



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

Her writings cover challenges 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.

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.

Exemplary contributions in Feature Writing

Raymond Rajabalan Presented by Dr. B. Sivakadacham



Hailing from Kayts, Northern Province of Sri Lanka, Raymond Rajabalan had his early education at Kayts St. Antony's college. He continued his education at St. Patrick's College and Jaffna College before gaining admission to University of Peradeniya.

After completing his Honours Degree course in Botany he taught in a number of educational institutions including St. Antony's College, Kandy and St. Peter's College, Colombo.

While serving at St. Peter's College, he was appointed as Additional Chief examiner for GCE A/L Botany Soon after that he was appointed by the Department of Examinations as a translator of Biology text books.

In 1981, he as well his wife were recruited by the Civil Service Commission of Sokoto state, Nigeria for teaching appointments. While serving there, Raymond was appointed as a marking examiner for Biology exams conducted by West African Examinations Council.

After moving to Canada in 1986, he changed his career to Accounting and successfully completed Diploma Accounting Course at Centennial College. He then served in a couple of leading business institutions before retiring a few years ago.

He is a free-lance writer and has contributed several well researched articles to the Monsoon Journal ever since its inception.



Exemplary contributions in Feature Writing

Chelvadurai Kamalaharan

Presented by Gajan Mahakanapathy,
RE/MAX Community



Chelvadurai KAMALAHARAN from Inuvil, Sri Lanka now a Canadian citizen settled in Montreal is an Arts graduate of the University of Peradeniya with English as one of the subjects and a Post Graduate Diploma holder in Education (Teaching English as a Secondary Language – TESL) of the University of Colombo. He had served as a teacher in the Ministry of Education for 33 years and as an Instructor in English in the University of Jaffna, in the Technical College Jaffna and as a lecturer in English in the Open University Jaffna.

He has contributed short stories, poems, feature articles and reviews in the Sri Lankan newspapers: Daily News,

Observer, The Island, Sunday Times and the Saturday Review. He has been contributing a variety of articles to Monsoon Journal every month since January 2012 to date. He has also published a book titled 'Reflections', a collection of short stories and poems.

Travelling, photography and listening to music are some of his other hobbies.

Exemplary contributions in Feature Writing

Jesudason J. Atputharajah

Presented by S. Selvaratnam,
RG Education Centres



J.J. Atputharajah, B.A. (Cey), Post Graduate Diploma-in-Education (Peradeniya), SLETS-Class 1 (Ministry of Education). Born in Sri Lanka, I migrated to Canada in 1999. I was a teacher in Sri Lanka, where I taught in both secondary schools, Teachers colleges and some part-time work at the University of Jaffna. I have also taught for about 8 years at Nigeria on a foreign assignment. In Canada, I worked as a supply teacher in Geography and as an ESL teacher for newcomers to Canada. My teaching subjects in Sri Lanka were Geography, English, Western History and Principles

of Education.

Besides these I served as an instructor with the GELT and TACEP English teaching programs and also helped as an editor for the FORUM and ECHOE-magazines published on behalf of these projects. I had an interest in writing poetry right from my school days, though I was not an expert at it. I have written poems for Poetry.Com and Poeticious - on-line promoters for poetry writing. My interest in journalism also started earlier when I wrote articles and news reports to the 'Morning Star'-a church newspaper of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. Subsequently I have written articles to the Sunday Observer and the Sunday Times-though not regularly.

In Canada I write articles and news reports for the Toronto Monsoon Journal and at times for other journals like the Sri Lankan Anchorman, Ceylon Express and Siraku- a Tamil monthly Christian newspaper. Currently I write a series of write-ups for Monsoon Journal entitled Valluvar's views-giving the gist of ten couplets of Kural on a particular subject. I thank the Editor of the Toronto Monsoon Journal for his support and encouragement to pursue my interest in the field of journalism.

Exemplary contributions in Feature Writing

Sivanesan Sinniah

Presented by Dr. A. Shanmugavadivel



Sivanesan Sinniah is a retired Principal from Kopay Christian College, Kopay, Sri Lanka and moved to Nigeria in 1980 as a Lecturer at a Women Teachers' College.

Arrived in Canada in 1986 and pursued his career in the field of teaching and was successful in working at TDSB and YRSB at the beginning and also worked at many other institutions those provide credit courses in Tamil & English.

He is also a qualified Freelance Interpreter and Translator.

His expertise is that he is one of the Tamil Material Selector for Toronto Public Library since 1996 to date.

He is a very active in Social and volunteer Services sector having served in many boards of institutions as a member, life member, director and President.

For his voluntarism, social and spiritual services, he was awarded many titles ranging from Volunteer Award for 5 yrs, 10 yrs & 20 yrs from Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship and Queen Elizabeth 11 Diamond Jubilee Medal 2012. He also received "KALA RATNA" Award for service to Hindu Community by Hindu Priests Association in 2017.

With extra ordinary knowledge in Literary & Fine arts Skills, he achieved the following:

Author of 7 books in Tamil and 2 books in English.

Contributes articles in Tamil and English on Science, Hindu Religion, Tamil Culture and Language to newspapers, Magazines and Journals.

Writes Short Stories, Poems and Reviews of books, Bharatha Natyam, Musical and Instrumental Performances for Newspapers.

Radio and TV broadcaster, Program Conductor, Interviewer.

Public Speaker, Debater and Conductor of various stage programs.

Writer and Director of Stage and Radio Plays.

Conducted many workshops and Presented papers at many International Conferences in Canada, USA, Switzerland, Netherland, Sri Lanka and India.

Social Worker and Advisor to Students and families.

Exemplary contributions in Feature Writing

Thiru K. Thirukumaran



Thiru K. Thirukumaran has worked as a journalist in Sri Lanka from 1983 – 1984 for premier Tamil daily Virakesari. Since living in USA and Canada, he has devoted on the journalism path for well over two decades as writer-curator of several news portals and as contributing writer to Monsoon Journal.

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Montage Awards 2018 May 6, 2018

Exemplary contributions in Editorial & Sports Feature Writing

Tashvir Narine



Tashvir Narine has been part of the MJ Team over seven years. He originally started with the Monsoon Journal as a sports contributor, focusing on his passion of cricket. Over the years, Tash has provided editorials on various subjects, including finance, religion and also represented the Monsoon Journal in the Greater Toronto Area. Born in Trinidad & Tobago, Tashvir and his family immigrated to Canada in 1996 where he later attended the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus. He holds a Bachelor of Science from University of Toronto and it was also at time that Tash developed an interest in journalism.

Although he currently works in the mortgage world, Tash has over ten years working with one of Canada's five major banks. He has performed various roles including customer service, product operations and management.

He is dedicated to professionalism and commitment, and has been providing high quality contributions to Monsoon Journal publications.

Exemplary contributions in Education and Learning skills Feature Writing

Janani Srikantha Presented by Bamathi Ramthas, INFORCELIFE



Janani Srikantha is a certified teacher who is experienced with the Ontario curriculum and the International Baccalaureate. She is knowledgeable on integrating technology to redefine learning that is inclusive of all students. Janani has led workshops for teachers and parents on topics that address different facets of education including literacy and inquiry-based learning.

As a true believer in the adage 'learning never ends', Janani is currently exploring and practicing mindfulness in the classroom, so that she can help her students to embrace social-emotional learning. Janani follows her passion for teaching and travelling by working at international schools.

For more information, please visit Thinkshift Edu on Facebook.

Exemplary contributions in Editorial & Special Events Writing

Krishni Narine



Krishni Narine is the Community Development Manager at the Scarborough and Rouge Hospital Foundation where she connects with stakeholders to support healthcare in Scarborough through fundraising events and community outreach.

She has a passion for creating new relationships and has done several public speaking engagements to various audiences.

Krishni graduated with Honours from University of Toronto- St. George campus in History and Political Science. She also holds a post graduate management certificate in Human Resources from Seneca College.

Krishni has been contributing to Monsoon Journal since its inception in multiple capacities through the publishers desk and reporting on special events.

Exemplary contributions in Science Feature Writing

Dr. Uthayan Thurairajah, Ph.D Presented by Dr. Mylashan Mylvaganam



Uthayan Thurairajah, PhD, RSE, LC, PEng, FEC, is a Project Manager at WSP with over twenty years of experience in Electrical Engineering and Lighting field, and he also holds a part-time Lecturer & Stewart position at Ryerson University & part-time professor at Centennial College. Dr. Uthayan is a member of several Canadian and international professional association including Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO), Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA), International Municipal Signal Association (IMSA), Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine (AIHM), and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research (APTR). He is a qualified Professional Engineer (P.

Eng.), and Fellow of Engineers Canada (FEC). He is also an internationally Qualified Lighting Professional (LC), Roadway Lighting Specialist (RLS), Traffic Signal Inspector (TSI), Work-Zone Safety Specialist (WSS) as well as Certified University Professor in Canada & United Kingdom (UTDP & SEDA).

He sits on various committees that set National Lighting Standards and are at the forefront of lighting science and technology. He continues to play a significant role in the development and implementation of ideas that influence both global and local lighting standards. He has worked on multi-disciplinary lighting and electrical projects for various clients. He is a researcher, frequent presenter and passionate about integrating science and health into the lighting design. He has extensive experience with the design, contract administration, quality verification engineering, construction supervision and project management of electrical and lighting projects in Canada and overseas.

He is an old student of Manipay Hindu College. After moved to Canada, he attended Midland Avenue C.I. and received Ontario Scholar. He completed undergraduate studies in Electrical Engineering (B.A.Sc.) Honors with Co-op at the University of Windsor. He conducted his Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree in Architectural Lighting Design at the Royal Institute of Technology (RIT), Sweden with a scholarship, and subsequently, completed his Doctor in Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Light and Health. He also made his post-graduate degree in Lighting Design & Light Pollution Research at Ryerson University.

He has published over 50 articles and academic papers in journals and presented over 25 papers at the national and international conferences. He has received several academic, professional and service awards and certificates from various Institutions in Canada, USA, UK, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Samoa, India and Sri Lanka. He also donates his time to numerous professional and community volunteer service activities. He has published several Books in Tamil and released songs & speeches in DVDs.

Exemplary contributions in Culinary Arts Feature Writing

Rajini Nathan Presented by MP for Scarborough-Rouge Park, Gary Anandasangaree



Rajini Nathan was born in the UK, completed part of her education in South India and moved to Canada in 2016 where she lives with her husband and daughter.

At the age of 17, she became the first Tamil TV and radio host born in the UK. She is a psychologist as well as a Bharathanatyam teacher and an active member of her local church in Toronto where she mentors young women and participates in their Sunday worship band. She loves making traditional Tamil food from Malaysia, to South Indian and Jaffna styles of cooking. She also coordinates cooking classes for people keen to learn more about Tamil food.

Follow her on Instagram @tamil_food



Exemplary contributions in Culinary Arts Feature Writing

Niranjini Thirunesan



Niranjini Thirunesan was born in London, UK and is where she currently resides. After completing her BSc in Human Biology, she qualified as a professional chef, working in restaurants from fine dining to strictly vegan. She works within the wine industry, helping on/off-trade clients and caterers create bespoke wine lists for events, while food pairing to suit their event menus.

Exemplary contributions in Editorial Writing

Harrish Thirukumaran Presented by Mike Ahilan, CIBC



Harrish Thirukumaran is a 2019 Master of Public Policy candidate at the University of Toronto's School of Public Policy and Governance. Some of his policy interests include international affairs, Indigenous policy and innovation and public policy. Harrish previously worked at all three levels of government in Canada, namely Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, the Regional Municipality of Niagara and the Ministry of Transportation Ontario.

He completed his Honours Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a concentration in Public Administration at

Brock University. Harrish has provided contributions on a host of topics such as international affairs and Tamil community events in Toronto to the Monsoon Journal since 2011.

Exemplary contributions in Business and Finance Feature Writing

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



David Joseph is a Financial Consultant with Investors Group Financial Services Inc. in Toronto. David has a M.A. in Economics and holds Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU) designations. David is committed to one-to-one service excellence and providing comprehensive financial advice on retirement planning, insurance, tax planning, cash flow management, investment planning and estate & succession planning to individuals and businesses. He has solid presentation skills and has conducted several corporate and public seminars on general financial planning topics.

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Exemplary contributions in Graphic Design

Santosh Kumar Nair Presented by Rajeev Koneswaran, RE/MAX Community



Santosh Kumar is from Chennai, India. He graduated in Statistics from Loyola College and did his post graduation in Business Administration (Marketing). Specialized in Advertising & Sales Promotion, he started his career as an advertising design executive and worked with advertisement agencies in Chennai and the Middle East. He immigrated to Canada in 2005 and has been actively associated with Monsoon Journal since early 2007.

Santosh works full time in advertising and also is a freelance graphic designer for various businesses.

Exemplary contributions in Public Service

Kidambi Raj Presented by Kumar Punithavel, the Co-Operators (former)



Originally from Chidambaram, South India. Obtained Master of Applied Science in Structural & Foundation Engineering from the Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. Taught for 6 years in the Engineering Faculty of the Annamalai University, S. India. Been in Canada for over 50 years. Worked as Professional Engineer for over 35 yrs. in Canada before taking early retirement and been involved in Voluntary work ever since.

Was a Member of the Board of Indian Immigrant Aid Services and the South Indian Cultural Organization, Bharathi Kala Manram from 1971-'81. Involved with the Temple doing voluntary work on the Public Relations area since 2012. Was responsible for bringing The Ganesha Temple as one

of 15 centres approved by the Richmond Hill Heritage Council, as part of their Doors Open event since 2015.

For over 10 years, I have been giving talk on Basics of Hinduism and conduct a tour at both Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple and Vishnu Mandir on an average of 45 to 50 times during an academic year. I give lecture and tour to York Regional Police also who visit the temple once a year as part of their Places of Worship Tour, designed mainly to enhance the cultural awareness to the Police Force.

Work with MPs, MPPs and Richmond Hill Councillors in arranging, Hindu Cultural events like the classical Indian Bhrathanatyam Dance and application of Mehndhi/Henna for the visitors, during their annual summer BBQs and other community events involving multicultural activities

Since mid 2015, have been contributing articles on Hindu Festivals and other valued aspects of Hinduism to the Monsoon Journal, thanks to the opportunity given by the Editor/Publisher Mr. Velumailum Loganathan.

Was a member of Richmond Hill Mayor's Intercultural Advisory Council and Cultural Leadership Council.

Recipient of "Most Outstanding Senior Citizen Award – 2017" from the Member of Parliament for Richmond Hill, Hon. Majid Jowhari and "Outstanding Ward 3 Volunteer Achievement Award – 2017" from the Ward 3 Councillor Castro Liu.

Exemplary contributions in Health & Wellness Feature Writing

Jeavana Sritharan, BHSc, MHSc, PhD Presented by Thulasi Muttulingam, Journalist



Jeavana Sritharan recently completed her doctoral degree in Medical Sciences (Occupational and Cancer Epidemiology) with the University of Toronto and Occupational Cancer Research Centre at Cancer Care Ontario. Her doctoral research was primarily focused on investigating the occupational etiology of prostate cancer in Canadian men.

She is currently working with the Occupational Cancer Research Centre on research related to occupational surveillance and cancer epidemiology. Prior to this, she completed a Master's Degree in Health Sciences (Community Health) at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor's Degree in

Health Sciences at the University of Ottawa. Jeavana aims to provide new knowledge on cancer risk factors to strengthen cancer prevention strategies and ultimately reduce the burden of cancer. She is also involved in other health projects related to mental health, disparities in health outcomes, and global health education.

Exemplary contributions in Health & Wellness Feature Writing

Andrea Shanmugarajah Presented by Dr. Venetia Wijayakumar



Andrea Shanmugarajah is a student at McMaster University, where she is in her second year of Medical School. She is hoping to pursue a career in family medicine, and hopes that as a physician in the future, she will be able to aid and advocate for those who are under-served, such as immigrants and refugees in Toronto.

She has particular interests in the areas of Women's Health, Care of the Elderly, and Immigrant & Refugee Health. These interests have developed through her volunteer and work experience, as well as her personal experiences caring for her late grandmother. Through her writing for Monsoon Journal, she hopes to educate readers about the resources available to them within the healthcare system.



Montage Awards 2018 May 6, 2018

Exemplary contributions in Health and Wellness & Sports Feature Writing

Dr. Shiyam Loganathan, MD



Dr. Shiyam Loganathan is an Internal Medicine Specialist, currently working at Northumberland Hills Hospital in Cobourg, Ontario and Cambellford Memorial Hospital in Cambellford, Ontario. His roles and responsibilities include acting as the admitting and most responsible physician for Intensive care, Special care, and Medical care patients, as well as consulting on a broad range of patients in the field of Internal Medicine.

Dr. Loganathan completed his medical residency in Internal Medicine at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center in Chicago, IL, USA. His training included residency rotations at St. Michael's Hospital in Downtown Toronto and clerkships at Leonard Chabert Hospital in Southern Louisiana.

He contributes in the fields of health & sports, his lifelong passions, for Monsoon Journal as a contributing writer.

Managing Editor & Publisher

Logan Velumailum



Logan Velumailum is very active in Real Estate Business with several years of experience and also advises clients in Financial Services. He is a member of Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce (CTCC) since its inception and has served on CTCC board prominently including as President for 4 terms. CTCC is the representative body of the Tamil Business community in Toronto, Canada.

His wealth of business experience and knowledge flows from his experience in client services for over twenty five years, originally in Insurance

and later in Real Estate.

He entered into media enterprise in June 2006 and has continuously published a new edition of Monsoon Journal every month in print and on the web.



Hon. Gary Anandasangaree MP, Parliamentarian for Scarborough-Rouge Park represented the Government of Canada at the event. The Member of Parliament delivered congratulatory messages to Monsoon Journal, Mr. Siva Sivapragasam, Ms. Thulasi Muttulingam, and all award recipients and also extended greetings to the attendees and all readers of Monsoon Journal, on behalf of the Prime Minister of Canada.

From L-R: Executive Editor Siva Sivapragasam, Geetha Logan, MP Gary Anandasangaree & Logan Velumailum

Exemplary contributions in Graphic Design

Suren Rasadurai



Suren Rasadurai is an experienced digital painter and graphic artist. Suren says he loves to paint manually as well. He is also an editorial cartoonist; his works have appeared in major newspapers in Sri Lanka. A dedicated professional with multi-faceted skills, Suren has clients in Sri Lanka and around the globe.

Exemplary contributions in Graphic Design

Gnane Gnanendran



Gnane Gnanendran joined merchant marine trade as a cadet officer after high school and became a 2nd Navigating Officer after graduating from LBS Nautical College, Mumbai in 1984. He served in the trade until 1987 and migrated to Canada to start a new life. He worked in a leading consulting engineering firm as an IT Operations staff for number of years. He is also a part-time professional photographer covering private functions.

He is an active member in the community participating in social events as a volunteer, stage performer and entertainer as well. He loves travel, photography, gardening and culinary art. Also contributes to print, web and social media.

Exemplary contributions in Web Design

Sam Daniel



Sam Daniel has been functioning as web design over the past 10 years. His website creations are professional and stunning using Joomla, WordPress, and HTML etc. He creates websites that are simple but powerful. The main goal of Sam is to make each website look like an original piece of art.

Client's satisfaction is Sam's top priority. Before creating the website, he gets the inputs from his clients about what they want from the website. His clients are happy and satisfied when the website is completed.

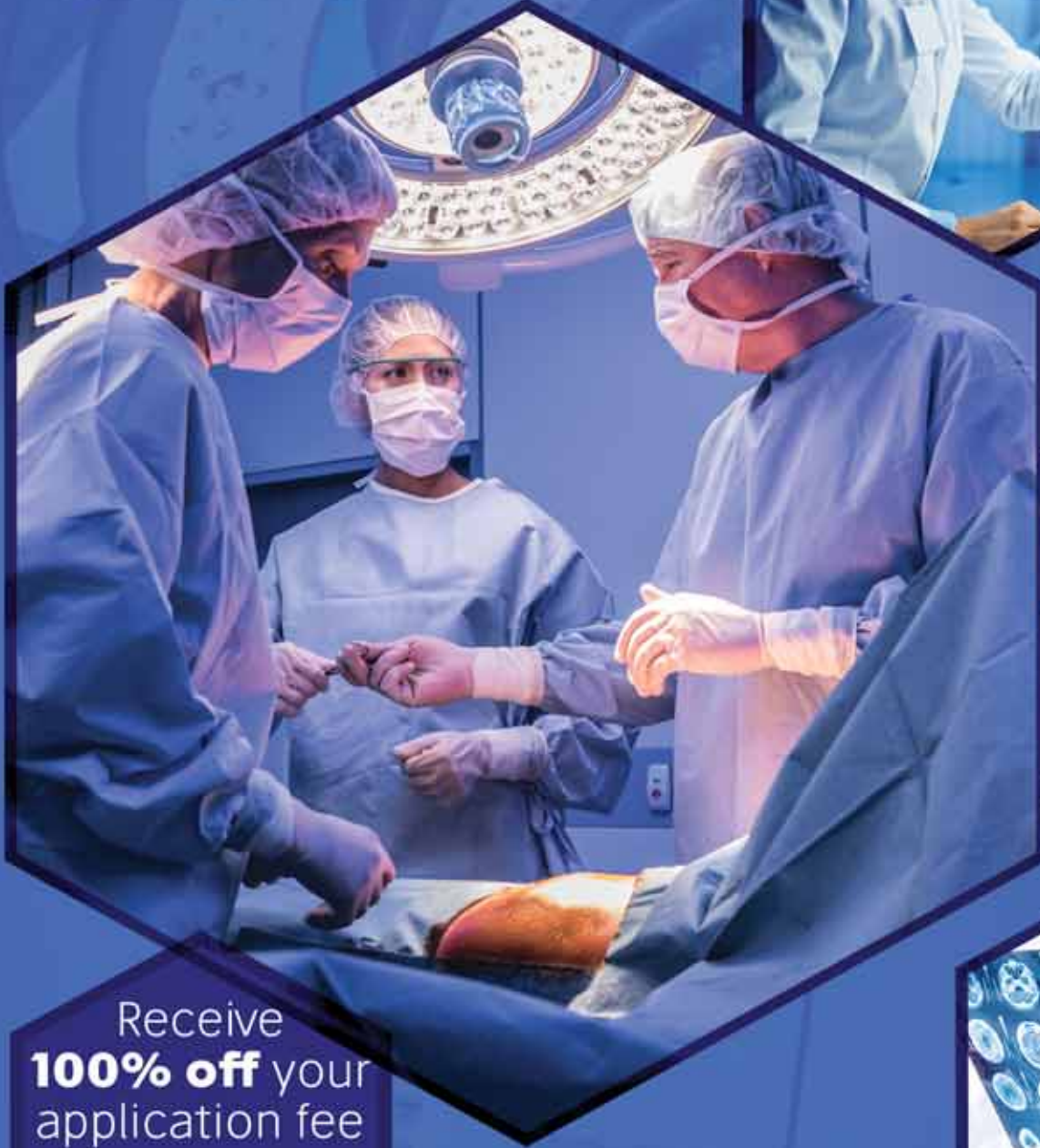
Presently he has created hundreds of websites and for his clients around the Globe.

Exemplary contributions in Management of Circulation

Meialagan Perampalam Presented by Vilosanan Sivatharman, Chapel Ridge



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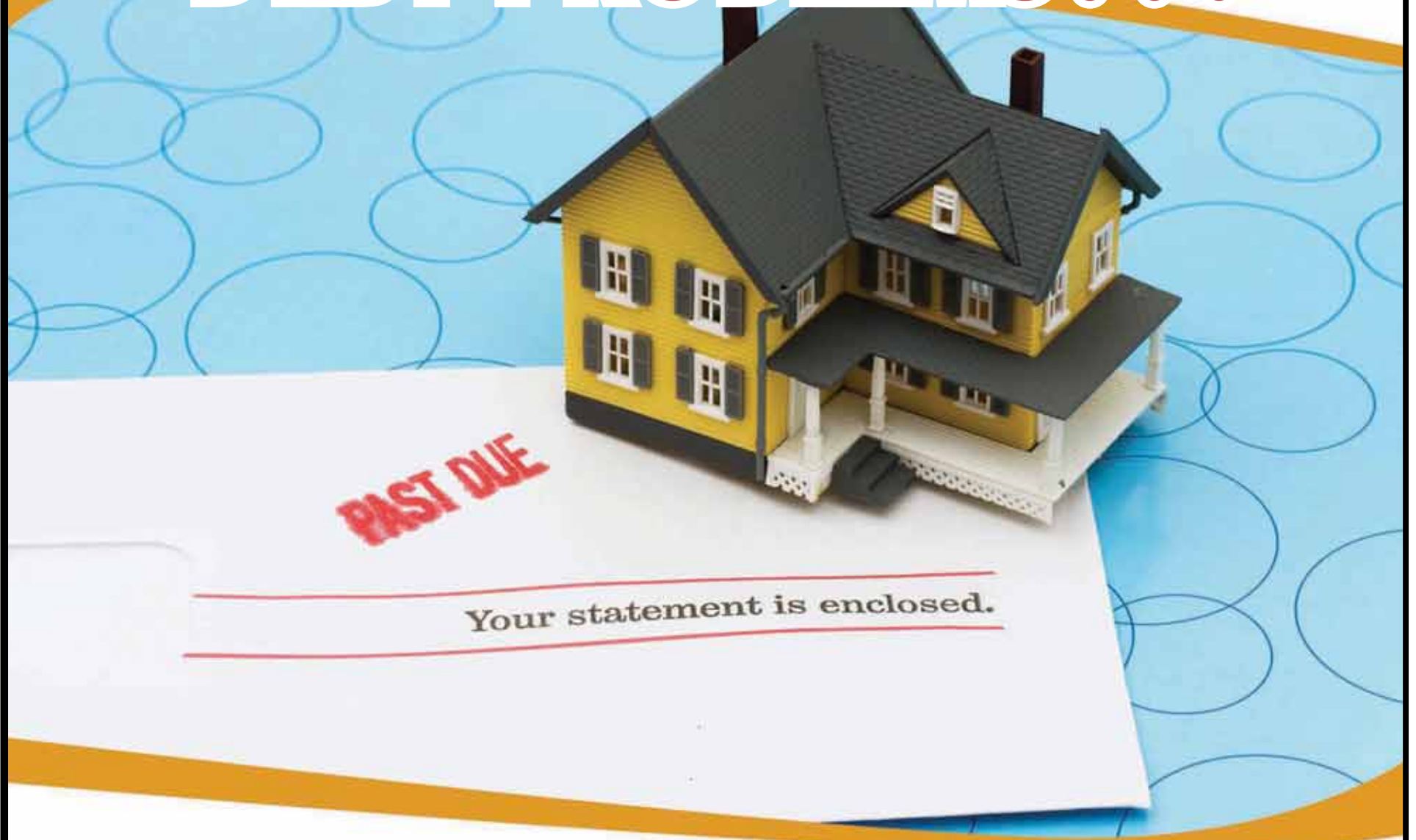
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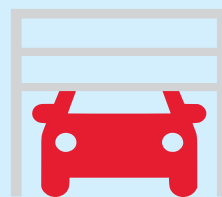
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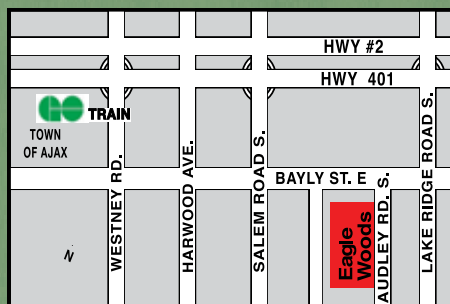
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MARKHAM STOUFFVILLE HOSPITAL'S TRIUMPHANT SUMMIT TO EVEREST BASE CAMP



The MSH Trek Everest Team reach Base Camp on May 1, 2018



Members of the MSH Trek Everest Team volunteered at several Nepalese medical facilities and schools as well as this senior citizens' home.



The MSH Trek Everest Team



Trekking to Everest Base Camp



(L-R) Craig McQuat, Andrew Lock, mountaineer, Brad Morris, MSH Foundation Board Chair, Peter Hillary, son of Sir Edmund Hillary at Everest Base Camp



(L-R) MSH Trek Everest Team Members David Bodenstein, Brad Morris, Rabiah Usman, Allan Bell, and Dr. Mitesh Mehta

MARKHAM, ON (May 17, 2018) – After over two weeks of trekking, a dedicated team of Markham

Stouffville Hospital (MSH) physicians, clinicians and hospital supporters took on an expedition to Mount Everest Base Camp through the Himalayan region of Nepal and successfully conquered it.

The team of 25 had only nine months to prepare for this adventure of a lifetime. They exercised a number of days each week, learned breathing techniques and geared up with all the necessary tools for the journey, all to ensure they could handle the tough terrains and varying conditions of one of the highest peaks in the world.

“Our expedition is no doubt one of the hardest, most humbling and most rewarding commitments each of us has ever done,” says Brad Morris, Board Chair, MSH Foundation. “This experience tested our personal limits... not only were there physical demands on our own fitness levels but physiology and the unknown of one's body and ability to adapt to altitude and changing conditions were challenges too. Beyond the physical it was a mental endurance challenge.”

The entire team relied heavily on one another to persevere—some days more difficult

than the other. Dr. Eileen Lougheed, a family physician, participated in MSH Foundation's adventure to Mount Kilimanjaro in 2011, also alongside her husband Brandon and anticipated some of the medical challenges.

“In similar adventures I have been on, the typical illnesses do surface and they surface on day one. They could be as simple as skin abrasions, respiratory infection to gastrointestinal concerns and musculoskeletal,” Dr. Lougheed adds. “When packing, I typically start from the bottom up and pack all the necessary tools and medicine required that would help support the entire team.”

The adventure coincided with the celebration of the 65th anniversary of Sir Edmund Hillary's ascent to the top of Everest. The team was led by the legendary mountaineer, his son, Peter Hillary and was also accompanied by Andrew Lock, an Australian who has summited all 14 of earth's 8,000-metre peaks.

“Peter was with us every step of the way,” says Susan Sheffield, Director, Child Development at MSH. “We were also grateful to share in his passion for what the family has done and visited hospitals and schools that their family had built.”

Prior to the start of the trek – a number of the members volunteered at Nepalese schools and medical facilities as a way to give back to the developing country. This was on top of raising a minimum of \$10,000 each to support surgical care at MSH.

The team is continually fundraising and have raised nearly 80 per cent of their \$750,000 goal to help MSH build a specialized “hybrid” operating room that's expected to cut surgical wait times and improve patient care. For additional coverage and to support visit mshtrekeverest.ca.

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.



PHYSICAL AND MENTAL STRENGTH ARE THE KEYS TO RECOVERY

Crystal Saverimuttu, is an impressive young woman who has faced despair and come back stronger and wiser. We can all learn from her wisdom when facing adversity ourselves – or when supporting a loved one who has had a traumatic health event.

Last summer, Crystal was living a busy life. She had a successful career as an internal auditor and was planning her wedding to take place in October. Then, in August 2017, Crystal was diagnosed with a quickly growing rare tumor on her brain stem, after reporting some strange visual symptoms. Learning she had a tumor was horrifying news, but Crystal had little time to worry. Surgery was set up to remove the tumor and the wedding was indefinitely postponed.

The tumor was successfully removed, but unfortunately for Crystal, she developed a blood clot, which caused a number of neurological problems, much like a stroke. She was partially paralyzed and permanently lost her hearing in one ear.

How she is doing now

Initially treated at St. Michael's Hospital, Crystal came to Providence Healthcare for occupational and rehab therapy. In the months since her surgery, she has made dramatic progress. She has no facial paralysis now, and is regaining her strength. She is walking, but is still having trouble with balance. No longer an in-patient, she comes to Providence from home regularly to continue her therapy and is hoping her balance will be sufficiently improved by October so she can return to work.

Crystal continues to have anxiety and panic attacks, which drain her energy, but she is working with her neuropsychiatrist and recognizes she is still a work in progress. As she says: "Providence has shown me the basics of how to start getting my life back to normal (75 per cent) and now I have to put in the work to achieve the rest (20 per cent) while learning to accept I can never be 100 per cent because I will always face some issues."

What you should know

Crystal wants people to know that Providence creates the perfect environment for finding one's strength and she urges people to make donations to help more people like her.

"I can't say enough about Providence," says Crystal. "As soon as you are introduced, everybody knows you.

All the little things are handled so you can concentrate on what really matters – building physical and mental strength. Everyone on your care team is a coach and a cheerleader, giving you support so you believe that your goals are achievable. You can be yourself. No pretending and no judgements, compared to the outside world. It's just a very positive environment for doing the hard work you have to do."

A positive outlook is essential

When Crystal tells her story, you get a feel for her wonderful sense of humor and positive outlook. Of her 12-hour surgery, she says: "it was the best sleep I've ever had!" Of the hair cut the surgeons gave her (they shaved off a portion of her beautiful long hair), she says: "They are very good surgeons, but very bad hair dressers!" That positive view of the world would become one of the most important factors in her recovery and something she continues to work on.

The role of friends and family

Crystal talks about the importance of hope and willpower, and the essential role that friends and family can play in recovery by demonstrating their understanding and patience – and holding back judgement. "It's understandable that families and friends want to see their loved one back on their feet, living a normal life, so they tend to push them, and that breaks down patients' belief in themselves. People need to understand that a person who is recovering from a major illness might not look sick anymore, but they may not be able to do things at the same speed as before – and that is distressing to them. What they need is love and encouragement so they can regain their mental strength and fight for their physical strength. Show them kindness and gentle support, even when it is trying your patience," she says.

If Crystal's story has touched you, please consider making a gift to Providence. Contact Joanne Tsang, Associate Director, Major and Planned Gifts, at 416-285-3669 or jtsang@providence.on.ca.

Providence Healthcare is a leader in providing rehabilitation, long-term care, palliative care and community programs in Toronto. To learn more, visit www.providence.on.ca.



Crystal Saverimuttu

You are helping Scarborough and Rouge Hospital plan its future

With input from community members, the hospital is shaping the future of care in Scarborough.



Residents and partner providers come out for second Community Forum

Scarborough and Rouge Hospital held its second community forum on April 25. Like the first meeting in February, it was another engaging evening with lots of great discussion and input.

More than 50 people came together to get an update on planning for future facilities, and to review drafts of several planning components, including the hospital's mission, vision, and values; strategic directions; and a permanent hospital name and tagline.

The feedback staff received helped to provide a different perspective on the work in development, and ensured that the planning process

truly listens to the voice of Scarborough's community.

Community members shared that:

- The hospital plays a pivotal role in meeting the needs of its local community.
- Hospital planning should align with provincial priorities, including how services are delivered across different points of care.
- Patients and care delivery should be incorporated within the mission statement.
- The Hospital should take a bold approach to planning.

The hospital also held focus groups to review plans and ideas with community health service providers. Representatives from 24 organizations shared their feedback and insights during four sessions. Thank you to Carefirst, TAIBU

Community Health Centre, and the Toronto Public Library for hosting these sessions.

What's coming next?

Scarborough and Rouge Hospital's Annual General Meeting.

Save the date:
Thursday, June 28

The hospital Board of Directors is excited to reveal your community hospital's permanent name and logo, and launch a new strategic plan.

Find more details about the AGM at www.srh-hospital.ca





Special Feature



THE TIMELY ACTION OF A SRI LANKAN TAMIL YOUTH SAVES LIFE OF A TORONTO MAN

Aeron Soosaipillai didn't hesitate to walk off the platform, onto the train tracks and toward the man on the bridge, eventually pulling him to safety

By: Raymond Rajabalan

A man was contemplating jumping to his death until a commuter stepped in at the right time.

Aeron Soosaipillai, 20, recently received a safety award from Metrolinx for saving man's life.

On his regular morning commute from Pickering to Union Station in early April, Ryerson University student Aeron Soosaipillai happened to glance out the GO train window and noticed a man teetering on the side of a rail bridge over St. Clair Avenue East. The sight gave him a sick feeling in the pit of his stomach.

"No one can just be chilling there like that," said Soosaipillai, recalling what was going through his mind at the time as he received a safety award from Metrolinx last April at its headquarters on Front Street West.

As the train pulled into the Scarborough GO station that day, Soosaipillai says he got the sense he was the only passenger to notice the man, so he burst out

of his seat.

"I pointed to the rail and said, 'You're never going back there, okay?'"

- Aeron Soosaipillai to the man on the bridge

"The doors took a while to open and when they did I ran down the platform toward him. I took off my bag and my jacket walked across the tracks and started talking to him," he said. The man did not want to talk, Soosaipillai said. Instead, the man swore at him and continued edging farther away toward the middle of the bridge. Soosaipillai kept talking to the visibly distraught man.

Man handed Soosaipillai his son's baby shoe

"I told him about my problems. I said we can get through this together," he said. By that point, police had started closing off the road below. It's at that point when the man handed Soosaipillai something very personal. "It was a baby shoe" belonging to the man's young son, he said. "He said, 'Just do one thing for me. Tell him that I love him,'" Soosaipillai recounted.

"I can't do that for you. You have to tell [your son] that every single day of your life," Soosaipillai remembers replying.

I was thinking about him and his kid at that point.- Aeron Soosaipillai

That exchange was enough to persuade the man to accept Soosaipillai's helping hand.

"He put his arms up and at that point I just grabbed him," he said. Hoisted back to safety, the two men sat on the side of the tracks and cried. "I was thinking about him and his kid at that point, you know what I mean?" Soosaipillai said.

"Then I pointed to the rail and said, 'You're never going back there okay? Things are going to go up from here.'"

'The whole world needs people like Aeron'

Soon after, GO Transit officers and Toronto Police attended to the man. Soosaipillai grabbed his bag and started walking off and that's when the gravity of the situation hit him.

"I was really shaking and the whole day I was very emotional and overwhelmed," he said.

"The whole world needs people like Aeron," said Metrolinx spokesperson, Anne Marie Aikins at the award ceremony on Thursday April 19.

"It was an inconvenience for him to get off that train and he did."

GO Trains and their infrastructure are sadly popular destinations for people looking to commit suicide, she said. "Often, unfortunately, it's a means people use to end their lives when they're desperate, and this man was clearly desperate," she said.

"Hero" is a label Soosaipillai finds cumbersome.

"It's not something I could have ever pictured myself doing. I'm not sure how I did it," he said while receiving his award.

He ended the ceremony with this message:

"It's in all of us. Even when you think it's not. We should just try our best to do the best."

Source: Ali Chiasson:
CBC News Posted:
Apr 26, 2018



Soosaipillai received a safety award Thursday from Metrolinx board member Anne Golden



**Exclusive
Special
Feature**

New novel about Tamil asylum-seekers reveals Canada's 'split personality' about refugees

"I am Sri Lankan and my father is Tamil. I was feeling this great psychic distance and this great physical distance, but also feeling very connected to these people"
— Sharon Bala



Among the 155 Tamil refugees found floating off the coast of Newfoundland in 1986 were a handful of women and children. They are pictured here leaving the Leonard J. Crowley after docking in St. John's.

Raymond Rajabalan

On August 13, 2010, the Canadian navy intercepted a rusty cargo ship called the MV Sun Sea off the coast of British Columbia.

There were nearly 500 Tamil asylum-seekers onboard. They had fled Sri Lanka after the end of a long and gruesome civil war between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, also known as the Tamil Tigers.

The Tigers had been fighting to establish a separate state for Tamils, an ethnic minority in Sri Lanka. They were also a terrorist group, responsible for the invention of the suicide belt and the assassinations of a Sri Lankan president and a former Indian prime minister.

The MV Sun Sea meant very different things to different people. Some worried that passengers onboard could have connections to the Tamil Tigers. To them, the ship looked like an invasion — a faceless throng of terrorists coming to Canada to wreak havoc and to regroup for another war.

Others saw the refugees as vulnerable people desperate for a better life, who had crossed the ocean on a rickety boat with their children, and their hopes, in their arms.

Bala's debut novel, *The Boat People*, begins with ship's arrival off the coast of Canada, and then follows its passengers into the legal purgatory that awaited them when they disembarked.

Sharon Bala was born in Dubai to Sri Lankan parents, and emigrated to Canada as a child. Last year she won the prestigious Writers' Trust/McClelland & Stewart

Journey Prize for her short story "Butter Tea at Starbucks."

She spoke to The Sunday Edition host Michael Enright about her new novel. Below is an excerpt of their conversation.

How the arrival of the MV Sun Sea inspired her novel

About a month [after the MV Sun Sea arrived], I was in Halifax. I was at the museum at Pier 21, and for decades, that was where most people arrived. I was wandering around Pier 21, looking at all the exhibits that were celebrating how welcoming and open we are as a people, and I was thinking that at the same time, on the other side of the country, there were these Tamil refugees who had come, and they were having the door slammed shut in their faces.

I was thinking, we have such a split personality in this country. We're here on one side of the country celebrating our generosity, and on the other, we're saying, these people can't be trusted, we have to save ourselves and shut the door.

At the time I wasn't a writer, but I am Sri Lankan and my father is Tamil. I was feeling this great psychic distance and this great physical distance, but also feeling very connected to these people, [even though] I had no idea who they were.

As I was walking through the exhibit in Halifax, there was a quote on the wall from an anonymous immigration official: "You've come to a good country, there's room for you here." I wrote that down — I don't even know why, but I did. Fast forward to 2013, I was starting to write, I was thinking about starting a



A Sri Lankan father and son attempt to make it to Canada in spite of the country's security concerns regarding refugees in Sharon Bala's new novel, "The Boat People".

novel, and this came back to me. Originally, I put that quote in the mouth of a character in the novel, and I had thought about using some version of it, like A Good Country as a title at the book — because I was also then researching draft dodgers and the underground railroad and the Vietnamese, war brides and all of that.



Sharon Bala with Michael Enright at the CBC in Toronto

It struck me how capricious the system is. When do you arrive, and what mood are we in? Canada's shifting attitudes toward refugees and immigrants

It's timing. I don't think we ever get better, and I don't think we ever get worse. I think we just

have cycles. In 1986, around the same time that my family came, there were a group of Tamil refugees who were found floating off the coast of Newfoundland in these life rafts.

Mulroney was the prime minister. There was a lot of talk, even on the other side of the border, of, "These are terrorists, they shouldn't let them in, they should send them back to where they came from." I will never forget what Mulroney said. It was, "If we err, let it be on the side of compassion." They were treated so compassionately — but then, a few years later, different Tamils, same country, and it was not a good welcome.

Boats, for some reason, get people's backs up. One of the things I found when I was researching is that there two ways to come as a refugee. You can apply from the country where you're living, get status and then show up. Or you can just show up, ask for asylum, and take your chances. If you come across the border on foot, or if you come by boat, the media spotlight is on you, and I think that changes the way the government reacts to it. If you just come quietly, one family at a time, at the airport, there's no media spotlight on it. So that's the part, also, that's capricious.

The thing I learned from this book is, if you're actually going to try to sneak into the country, don't get in a boat. If you get in a boat, everybody is going to be watching the second you arrive, and then the government will feel like they have to address it in some way. They either have to show that they're compassionate or show that they're stern, and we want to cut this off, and there's potentially an armada of boats waiting and we can't look like a soft touch.

How the refugees on the boat view Canada before they disembark

In [the novel's] first scene, they're saying, "Land is close. Who will get us first? Will it be America or Canada?" I'm pretty sure I got that from something I read from the real people on the MV Sun Sea. They had been saying to each other, "Fingers crossed it will be Canada we land in. Fingers crossed the Americans won't intercept us." Which is ironic.

In that scene, when they realize it's Canada they're coming to and they start cheering — part of that is a cheer of, "We have made it." But part of it is, "We're coming to the good country, the one that's going to take care of us."

Why two characters blocking refugees come from immigrant backgrounds

Because that really does happen. I sometimes joke that one of the subtitles of the book could be, "Everyone's a little bit racist."

My cousin and I were just talking about this, about how sometimes the people who are hardest on new immigrants, newcomers, are old immigrants. I think that



About Sharon Bala, Writer

Her bestselling debut novel, *The Boat People*, was a finalist for Canada Reads 2018. Published in January 2018, it is available worldwide with forthcoming translations in French, Arabic, and Turkish. The unpublished manuscript won the Percy Janes First Novel Award (May 2015) and was short listed for the Fresh Fish Award (October 2015).

In 2017, Sharon won the Journey Prize and had a second story long-listed in the anthology. A three-time recipient of Newfoundland and Labrador's Arts and Letters award, she has stories published in *Hazlitt*, *Grain*, *Maisonneuve*, *The Dalhousie Review*, *Riddle Fence*, *Room*, *Prism international*, *The New Quarterly*, and in an anthology called *Racket: New Writing From Newfoundland* (Breakwater Books, Fall 2015).

Sharon is a member of the Port Authority writing group. They can be found every second Tuesday swapping fiction in the closet of a store room on Memorial University's campus.

In her past lives, she worked in PR, event planning, and enjoyed a brief stint as a British housewife. Today, she earns her bread with words. She's available for speaking engagements, to write articles and essays, adjudicate competitions, for manuscript evaluations, and editorial aid.

Sharon was born in Dubai, raised in Ontario, and now lives in St. John's, Newfoundland with her husband, the mathematician Tom Baird.

can happen even in the space of one generation. I believe you can be a refugee who arrives at the border, who seeks asylum, who gets in. A few decades later, you just kind of forget, and you start saying, "Well, I don't know about those Syrians. Can we really trust them?"

I think that's something that's not talked about often in public. Some of us in the immigrant community talk about it amongst ourselves, but we don't often speak about it, so I wanted to show it.

CBC Radio: January 14



WORDS OF PEACE



The Demand for Peace

People talk about the options life presents—different lifestyles, different careers, different hobbies. What's less often understood is that life makes demands that are not optional, says Prem Rawat, who has been recognized in several nations as an Ambassador for Peace.

"What is not an option in life," he says, "is to feel complete—to feel joy, to feel clarity, to understand. Life is not a concept. Life is not somebody's idea. It's something real."

To illustrate what he means, Mr. Rawat tells the story of King Solomon and the infant whom two women claimed.

"Once in the court of King Solomon, who was a very wise ruler," he says, "two women arrived with a baby each said was hers. After hearing all the bickering between the two, King Solomon asked for a sword.

"The king said since it was obvious both women wanted the baby, 'What we'll do is just split this baby in half. We'll give one half to you and one half to you.' They were both very quiet until the sword was brought.

As soon it was lifted, one of the women said, 'Wait! Stop. Let her have the baby. Don't split it. Let her have it.'

"King Solomon put the sword down and said, 'Give the baby to the woman who spoke. This baby belongs to her.'

"Now, what's the point of this story? For the real mother, half a baby was no option. Because she truly was the mother, it was in her interest that her baby live. That's what mothering is all about.

"In the same way, life offers no options. It's afoot. It's happening. Do you feel a demand for peace within you? What demands peace is life itself. We need to have peace for as long as we are alive."

In fact, Mr. Rawat says, this is what it means to be alive: to understand the urgency of that request, to understand what this life really needs. Who am I? What do I really need? What are the components? What are my necessities? What are those needs without which, no matter how complete I try to be, I still feel incomplete?

"What has happened to us?" Mr. Rawat asks. "Illusion has become reality, and reality has become illusion. 'Oh, peace,' people say. 'I'm not into that stuff.' Really? Peace should be our first priority. What's happening? People are trying to preserve the institution of marriage, and yet marriages are falling apart left and right. Why, I wonder? Could it be because parents don't understand their children, and children don't understand their parents?"

"I'm not talking about having good manners. I'm talking about having respect. Human beings have no respect for other human beings—and respect for others only comes when we have respect for ourselves."

When rain comes to the desert, he says, millions of seeds that have been waiting beneath the soil understand that their time has come. No one needs to tell them to wake up. The rain has come. This is what they were waiting for, and the desert blooms.

In the same way, Mr. Rawat says, "I talk about the rain of understanding, the rain of knowledge, the rain

of clarity. When that rain has come, it's time for the flowers in this desert of the heart to bloom. Without that rain, we remain a desert. Without love, without feeling, without understanding, without respect, who are we?"

"Of all the accomplishments we can have in life, which one is the most important? If we can be in touch with this magic called life, then we will know what life demands. Life demands peace. That's when life can dance. That's when it can flourish. That's when it can be; that's when it can expand. That's when it can encompass us; that's when it can be fulfilling. Without that, all we have is fear."

To learn more about Prem Rawat:
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416 431 5000 Tamil

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www.premrawat.com

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ARUBA: ONE OF THE WORLD'S BEST HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS

(It lives up to its nickname 'The Happy Island')

C. Kamalaharan

My long felt desire of visiting one of the Caribbean Islands became a reality in March 2018 when my wife and I joined my daughter's family on a memorable trip to that enchanting island. It was only a four and a half hour flight to the island from New York. As the plane descended I was able to see the brownish coastline with patches of greenery among the populace. As the plane touched the tarmac and wheeled towards the terminal building my heart began to beat fast in anxiety at the thought of setting foot on the island referred to as paradise on earth. Walking out of the building I saw the area swarming with tourists busy shopping. Hiring a taxi we left for the Hilton hotel. On the way I was amazed to see a huge multi-decked building with lots of identical rooms on the side close to the road. A closer view presented a cruising liner docked there. I was told that every week at least two such liners arrive with a full complement of tourists.

Enjoying the enthralling sights on either side of the highway we arrived at the Hilton hotel to be warmly received by the ever courteous staff who kept in readiness glasses of champagne. Being teetotalers we opted for the purified lime water that was also ready to be served. As all the normal rooms were occupied we were fortunate to be accommodated for a day in the luxurious pent house. What a panoramic view of the different shades of the greenish blue ocean high above the palm trees, buildings and cabanas (tourists' huts)! Far below we saw water cascading over rock forming a pool, children and adults splashing and swimming in the pools, milling crowd everywhere; in restaurants, in juice and ice cream parlours and along the stretch of white sand beach. We presumed that those fascinating sights were preludes to what were in store for us. To cater to the continuous arrival of tourists there are many such luxurious hotels walking distance from the beach. There are also secluded luxury accommodations further into the interior of the island.

Located just eighteen miles North of Venezuela the first known inhabitants of Aruba were the Caiquetio Indians from Venezuela. Being primitive settlers they depended on the sea for their survival by fishing and hunting. In 1499 a Spanish explorer discovered Aruba and brought the island under Spanish control for 137 years. Due to Aruba's strategic location the Dutch occupied the island in 1636. Later the Netherlands took it back.

Aruba now remains a constituent country of the kingdom of Netherlands.



Foreign affairs and national defence are still controlled by the kingdom. But all internal affairs including laws, policies and currency are under the control of the Aruban country. There are ninety nationalities representing a population of 110,000 and one third of the population lives in Oranjestad, the capitol of Aruba which is always bustling with activity particularly when cruise liners arrive.

Tourism is Aruba's No.1 industry. It now accounts for around 75 percent of the country's gross national product. Due to this the people of Aruba enjoy a healthy economy, an excellent educational system and a very low unemployment rate. As a result everyone comes under the middle class category, thereby controlling the cost of living and social classism, reducing inequality and offering quality of life throughout the island. In a land flowing with milk and honey it's no wonder Aruba offers remarkable array of attractions and activities to lure every traveller visiting the island.

The beach is always lively, full of amusements particularly during the evenings. While the elders stroll gaily along the sandy shores children engage themselves in a variety of activities: beach ball

games, build sand castles or sculptures, kite flying, bubble blowing and running along the beach or dabbling their feet in sea water. It's also a pleasant sight to see tourists moving about in rowing boats or travelling in sailing boats. At sunset the beach is crowded with photographers focussing their lenses to capture the spectacular sunset directly opposite to where they stand.

A few steps interior from the beach the elderly play beach volleyball in the sandy court while others lie on lounge chairs enjoying sunbath or engaging in silent reading. A few others relax in cabanas sipping liquor. The swimming pools in all hotels are full of activity and excitement. While children splash, dabble and swim in the pools the elderly either relax in the lounge chairs or after taking a dip in the pool go to the adjoining restaurant for a'booze.'

At nightfall the entire scenario changes transforming the environment into a vibrant nightlife for recreation, entertainment and amusement of the tourists. All major restaurants have their own casinos open from noon till just before sunrise the following morning. The machines use either US coins or tokens of



the same value. The legal age to enter a casino is eighteen years. Besides the casinos there are beach barbeques, cocktail parties, dance clubs, magic shows etc to entice the tourists. There are also several top class restaurants serving a variety of food: Italian restaurant, Chinese restaurant, Thai restaurant, Indian restaurant etc. The Japanese Hibachi & Grill is also available in some restaurants. To be fair all restaurants cater to vegetarians as well.

For shopping there are also well maintained malls mainly to cater to the continuous arrival of tourists. The whole area is a hive of activity. For US and Canada residents there is tax exemption of \$ 800 for purchases. Apart from the malls there are wayside stalls selling handicraft items. The Chakaranda Souvenirs sell unique items made by disabled Arubans. Mostly all are made from locally sourced driftwood and leather. These items can be engraved via laser etching on the spot.

Aruba has been transformed into one of the world's attractive destinations. It is the most favourite spot for holidaying mainly due to the well developed tourism. Apart from it the people of Aruba are friendly, compassionate and honest. Being middle class citizens they have everything they need. For this reason there is no theft, burglary or crime. As a result Aruba is considered as one of the safest countries in the world. That is why an exodus of tourists visit the country every year. Americans, Canadians, EU and most South American citizens don't need visa to enter Aruba.

How come a desert island Aruba has been transformed into a wealthy, attractive tourist country? Besides the well developed tourism industry and friendly and honest people bribery, corruption, hoarding and crime are totally absent. It is regarded as one of the safest islands in the Caribbean taking into consideration crime and safety, thereby earning its nickname 'The Happy Island.'

Liberal Candidates Standing up for Scarborough!



RE-ELECT

Lorenzo Berardinetti
Scarborough Southwest
votelorenzo.ca

For nearly 30 years, Lorenzo has served his community as an elected representative, standing up for the issues that matter most to working families in Scarborough Southwest. First as a City Councillor and then as MPP, Lorenzo has delivered better and more affordable transit for residents, enhanced health and mental health services at Providence Healthcare, and increased work protections for all.

Lorenzo fought for more affordable housing options and rent controls for all renters, while safeguarding the investment of existing homeowners. A strong advocate for people of all abilities, Lorenzo has worked closely with organizations like Variety Village to support their great programming and facilities. Lorenzo has also worked towards stronger customer protection measures, in addition to establishing the Bangladeshi Heritage Month in Ontario.



RE-ELECT

Mitzie Hunter
Scarborough-Guildwood
votehunter.ca

Mitzie has dedicated her career to public service. First elected as the MPP for Scarborough-Guildwood in 2013, Mitzie has delivered two way, all day GO service and reduced GO fares to \$3 per trip.

Mitzie most recently served as the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, where she increased access to education by implementing free tuition for over 235,000 college and university students. She previously served as Minister of Education implementing Ontario's first ever action plan to make classrooms more fair for students from diverse backgrounds, reduce class sizes and increase special needs funding.

Before entering politics, Mitzie was CEO of the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance. She also worked with Toronto Community Housing to advocate for more quality affordable housing across the city.



ELECT

Chin Lee
Scarborough North
chinlee.ca

Chin Lee has been serving the Scarborough North community since 2006 as the Toronto City Councillor for Ward 41 (Scarborough-Rouge River). He has worked hard to deliver better transit, affordable housing, programs for youth, and to reduce crime and make our community safer.

Lee first got involved in public life when he served as the President of the Goldhawk Community Association and co-founded the Scarborough Homeowner Alliance for Fair Taxation, helping to reduce property taxes for over 90% of North Scarborough homeowners. He understands that working together we can building strong communities.



ELECT

Mazhar Shafiq
Scarborough Centre
mazharshafiq.ca

An engineer by trade, Mazhar worked to ensure highway safety in Pakistan and the safety of cars produced in Canada after immigrating here with his family.

He has served as a senior advisor to Premier Kathleen Wynne since 2013. A community leader, Mazhar is an active supporter of several charities and community groups, such as the Muslim Welfare Centre and the International Development & Relief Foundation. He has championed improved transit and more investments for the Scarborough Rouge Hospital.

He is a former school council chair of his two sons' schools and ran a number of programs for youth.



ELECT

Sumi Shan
Scarborough-Rouge Park
sumishan.ca

Sumi Shan is a partner and managing director at Infinite Enviro Solutions and founder of Niche Strategies, an international agency focused on supporting start-up companies.

Sumi has over twenty years of public and private sector experience. She has been a senior advisor to provincial cabinet ministers helping with Ontario newcomers' economic integration and creating a more accountable government. She has also worked with senior leadership at the Heart & Stroke Foundation and with Microsoft Canada.

As the daughter of a refugee and an immigrant herself, Sumi understands the challenges families face trying to make ends meet. Watching her parents work incredibly hard instilled a lifelong commitment to public service and to improving the lives of others.



RE-ELECT

Soo Wong
Scarborough-Agincourt
votesoowong.ca

Soo Wong is the first female Chinese-Canadian to be elected to the Ontario Legislature.

Soo has been a strong advocate for the Scarborough-Agincourt community, first as a Toronto District School Board Trustee spearheaded the development of the first Type 1 diabetes management policy to be implemented by an Ontario public school board.

With her background as a registered nurse, Soo worked hard as MPP to secure important health care investments for the community, such as the Bridletowne Community Hub and additional long-term care beds at Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care. She has introduced a number of Private Member's Bills, including to proclaim a Nanjing Massacre Commemorative Day, Terry Fox Day, and Children and Youth in Care Day.

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

Authorized by the Ontario Liberal Party

THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ELECTIONS IN ONTARIO'S HISTORY.

On June 7th, there is only one choice that will ensure:



\$3 GO fares from any Scarborough station and a subway extension



Free childcare for preschoolers and full-day kindergarten



\$15 minimum wage and more protections for workers



Free prescription medication for children, youth, and seniors



Rent control and more affordable housing



Lower wait times at Scarborough Rouge Hospital and Providence Health

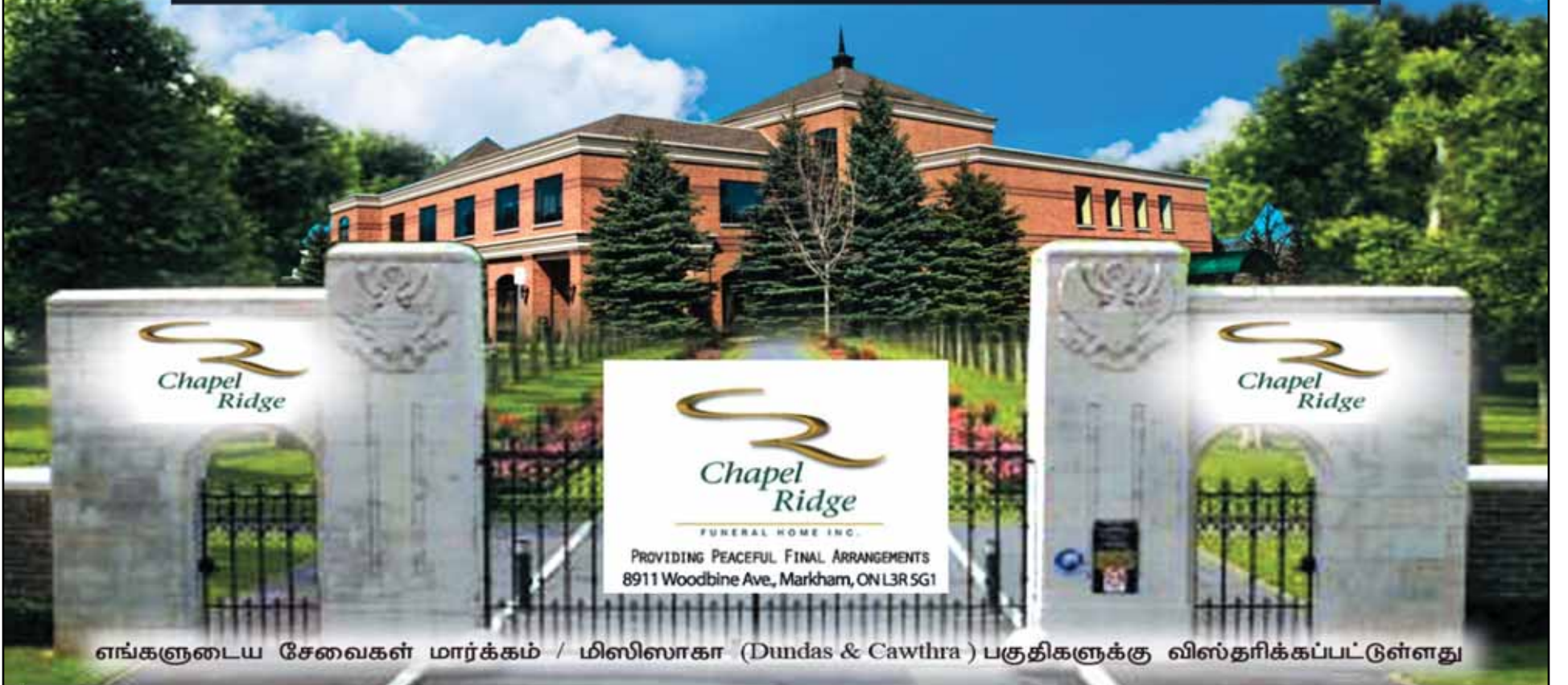
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Control of Temper



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JJ Atputharajah

If you want to protect yourself, guard against your anger; for anger not controlled would lead to self-destruction.

In the Book of Proverbs in the Bible the same idea is given as: 'a fool gives full vent to his anger; but a wise man quietly holds it back.' Only the man who controls his temper, where it can hurt is in fact controlling it, where his anger cannot have its sway; such an exercise is futile either way.

It is the weak man who could be easily hurt by a bully's anger. Even where it cannot hurt others, anger is bad; but where it does hurt, there is nothing worse. Only evil consequences, come out of anger, therefore anger should be

avoided at all cost. In 'Paradise Lost', Milton speaks of anger as one of the three besetting passions of Satan - in addition to envy and despair. There is no greater enemy to mankind than anger for it kills laughter and joy. Anger not only destroys those whom it affects, like fire, but it will also burn those kindred souls, who step in to help - as a raft towards salvation.

He who sees sustenance in anger and gives way to it, will suffer evil consequences. He is like a fool who slaps the ground and hurt himself. Even if the memory of a great wrong burns one up in holocaust, it is best to strain oneself to hold back the anger. Proverbs -in the

Bible gives an appropriate rendition of the idea when it says: 'a soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.'

To an ascetic, who does not even think angry thoughts, every constructive thought result in instant success. Those who have yielded to anger and to consequent evils are like the dead; while those who have kept anger in check are like good ascetics. Bible exhorts the same idea when it spells out: 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty and he that ruleth his spirit greater than the one who taketh the city.'

*"Thaanaithankakincinamkakkakavakkal,
Tannaiyekollumcinam."*

(Kural: 301-310)



Valluvar's Views



Some Features of Life in Jaffna

By: Jesudason Atputharajah

The Jaffna in the north of Sri Lanka has a geographic personality of its own. Its bed rock is laden with limestone rocks and has underground storage of water. The majority of the people living in the region are Tamils and their culture predominates. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in the villages and well irrigation is universally practiced as there are not many rivers in the area. Jaffna is lucky in that it has acquired a lot from the colonial powers who ruled the country for quite a number of years- the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. Several schools and colleges of good standing were founded by the westerners in the region so much so that many people of the area were able to get government jobs which made the leaders of the majority community to raise the use of the Sinhalese language and also promote Sinhalese culture. However there are some distinctive features of the Jaffna Region that are well worth mentioning.

A. Well-Based Irrigation:

Well irrigation is a major feature of farming in Jaffna. There are wells in almost all houses in Jaffna and many farmlands are irrigated with water drawn from wells. In those days water was drawn out manually from wells by farmers and they were using a palmyrah trunk device to draw water. Nowadays many are using mechanical devices like machines and pumps. Due to the underground stores of water prevalent in this limestone area, there are vast stores of water and it is a great blessing to a region that does not enjoy heavy rain. The bottom-less well at Puttur could be utilized to irrigate larger areas of land with better mechanical devices.

B. Agricultural Farmlands:

Agriculture is the main occupation of many village people in Jaffna. The red soiled areas of Jaffna mainly Chunnakam, Urumpirai, Kopay and Atchuvelli are noted for crops like tobacco, manioc, paddy, chillies, vegetables, mangoes and banana. The Jaffna farmers are noted for their hard work and they did well to produce sufficient quantities to take them for sale in all parts of the island. There are flourishing markets in Chunnakam, Chavakachcheri, Thinneveli and Jaffna where producers take their products for ready sale especially on Saturdays. During the peaceful days before the internal conflicts rail transport enabled the Jaffna farmer to take his produce to Colombo, Kandy and other towns for sale. Jaffna is also famous for fruits like Mangoes, Jak and Bannanas.

C. Fishing Centres/ Bathing Spots:

Fishing is the major occupation of the people living in the coastal areas of the Jaffna Peninsula. The seas around the Jaffna Peninsula are part of the vast Indian Ocean and they abound in vast variety of fish. The Jaffna fisherman adopts a variety of methods to catch fish and they go up to Katcha Island near India to catch fish. Point Pedro, Myliddy, Jaffna, Navanthurai, Pasaiyoor and K.K.S are some of the noted fishing centres in the area. There are also bathing spots in Jaffna especially the Keerimalai Tank and Sentham Kulam. Keerimalai



lai hot springs has become very famous with its curative properties.

D. Education Centres:

Jaffna is endowed with a large number of well-established schools and colleges. Ceylon was under the rule of the western counties like Portugal, Holland and Britain. The missionaries started schools in Jaffna with the aim of proselytising. There are both protestant and catholic schools and they helped to educate the Jaffna students so much so that they were able to provide the educated manpower needed for Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) before the independence of the country in 1947. The private schools have always strived to maintain good educational standards. However, government schools like Jaffna Hindu College, Vembadi Girls College and Hartley College are still maintaining good standards even after the takeover in 1960. Even now even after alleged discriminations, the Jaffna student who outshines others are able to get university entrance and get chosen to work in their desired vocations. There are also large number of tutorials in the area preparing students for public examinations mainly the GCE-Advanced Level Examination. The tutorial managers succeed to rope in the most popular teachers for the subjects in demand.

E. Industries in Jaffna

Jaffna is not well developed in the industrial field. Former Tamil leader the late G.G.Ponnampalam used his influence as Minister of Industries and Fisheries to establish a few industries in the Tamil areas. The K.K.S Cement Factory, the Paranthan Chemical Industries, the Leyden Banian Factory are some of the few factories established in the peninsula. The Cement Factory ceased to operate with the outbreak of communal violence in the north. The pace of industrial development have been greatly hampered by political disturbances and intransigence on the part of political authorities. The Provincial government should take greater interest in the matter and work towards planned development in the field.

H. Religious Establishments

Jaffna is a very active religious area.



There are a variety of religious establishments mainly Hindu, Christian and Catholic. The Kandasamy Temple at Nallur is the famous one with devotees getting together there on Fridays for Poojas and other special festivals in July-August called "thiruvizhlas". Those days are noted for business activities and Religious Street dances like 'Kavadees'. Pandals erected at main approach roads to the temple provide drinks for devotees coming in for the festivities. The car festival, the Sapparam festival and the Poongaavanam draw large crowds. There are also similar temples at Sella-Channathy, Nainathivu and Maviddapuram. Catholic Churches adorn the peninsula at various towns like Jaffna, Sillalai and Manipay reminiscent of the Portuguese rule in the island. Protestant churches mainly Anglican and American Mission are found in a number of towns in Jaffna. These religious bodies also established educational institutions which accounts for the remarkable rate of literacy prevalent in the area.

I. The Palmyrah Palm

The palmyrah palm is a distinguished feature of the natural vegetation in Jaffna peninsula. The palm is used for various purposes from age old times. The juice tapped from its flower is used to produce toddy-a very popular liquor and drink. There are several taverns situ-

ated in the area selling toddy. The latest is that toddy-tappers carry cell-phones with them and get their orders through them. The other palmyrah products are yams, jaggery, dried yams, pinaddu etc. Its trunk is used as well-sweep and its leaves for fencing and mats. During the internal strife several trees were felled down to erect bunkers and now those areas look barren. There is a vital need for replantation and the department of agriculture in the provincial government together with the Palmyrah Development Board must take care of this problem.

J. Politics in the Peninsula:

Minority rights appear to be the main factor in the politics of Jaffna. Right from the times of independence from the British, Jaffna political parties like the Tamil Congress, Federal Party and now the Tamil United Liberation Front have always vowed with each other to win minority rights. None of them have succeeded as the success of the Major parties in Sri Lanka depended on how well they deny the rights of the Tamils. Tamils have used all sorts of tactics including violence by the militants who even sacrificed their lives in order to win autonomy for the Tamils. Currently TULF have entered into an understanding with the major parties like the UNP and the SLFP but nothing substantial has been achieved yet. Nowadays the debate is about the treatment of the militants after the end of the civil war which is going on for more than a year without any solution reached yet.

K. Games in Jaffna:

In Jaffna both traditional and modern games are played. Ancient games like Kilithaddu, Vaar Race, Kokkan or Marble Twirling, Sadu Kudu are all on the wane. Now the popular games are Cricket, Football, Volleyball, Basket Ball, Netball and Tennis. Formally inter-school and inter-club football competitions were organized by the Jaffna Schools Sports Association(JSSA). Now there are friendly matches between schools. Cricket is also popular in the North especially among the private schools. The big matches between St.John's and Jaffna Central as well as the Jaffna College-St. Patrick's matches are well attended by the sports loving public. There are also matches between sports clubs though they are not as popular as the inter-school matches.

Jaffna has a personality of its own. It is a region where the Tamil way of living predominates. Although recent governments have tried to erase the Tamil supremacy in the region by planting Buddhist statues and recruiting Sinhalese workers to government offices in the North, it has raised tremendous opposition from the Tamil political parties and the Tamil people. Even the Tamil diaspora showed keen interest in the need to find out about their lost brethren after the Mullivaikal conflict. They wanted the areas occupied by the army to be released to the owners. Besides there is consensus of opinion amongst the Tamils that the army presence in the north should be reduced to the minimum- now that there are no civil conflicts in the area. There are Sinhalese leaders like Dr. Wikramabahu Karunaratne (L.S.S.P) who feel that cooperation and understanding between the Sinhalese and Tamils will help the real progress of the island nation.

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- ▶ Seek Perfection of
- ▶ Character
- ▶ Be Faithful
- ▶ Endeavour
- ▶ Respect Others
- ▶ Refrain from Violent Behaviour

Mr. Roy Chin Fee, the instructor at the Scarborough JKA, has been practicing Shotokan for over 40 years and teaching for over 25 years. His rank is godan (5th degree black belt), which he achieved in 2010. Throughout his training, he has travelled to Japan numerous times to train with all the top instructors at the JKA headquarters. While he no longer attends karate seminars held in Japan, he still actively attends the ones hosted in Toronto. Mr. Roy Chin Fee maintains a license rank of B-class, examiner rank of C-class, and a judge rank of B-class.

The Scarborough JKA offers one week of trial classes. The fees are very affordable. If you are interested in karate, we invite you to join us!

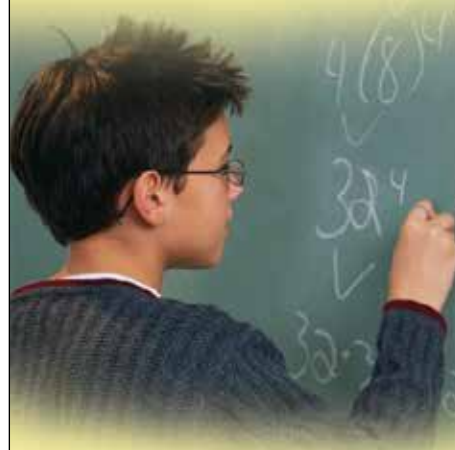
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LORD SHIVA: DENOTES CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE COSMIC RHYTHM

Science Has the Limitation Without Religion and Religion Has Ignorance Without Science

By: Uthayan Thurairajah



According to the scientists, the Primary Consciousness from which everything came to existence and Lord Shiva who represents Consciousness, symbolizes the Cosmic rhythm of the Universe. Shiva is the root and support of this universe, and the rhythm of his Cosmic dance is reflected in the atoms and the galaxies of the world. Science has the limitation, and it always needs evidence to prove. The theory developed by science can be changed. The recent discovery of speed of light overturns one of Einstein's fundamental laws of the universe.

SECRET OF CHIDAMBARAM

Shiva Lingam, a holy symbol of Lord Shiva, literally means the body of Shiva. It is considered as more sacred and holistic by Shiva devotees. Shiva Lingam is often seen as a symbol of the energy and potential of God. The word "Lingam" has two parts – Lim (the end) and Gam (the recreation). It represents the manifesting power of God, and some interpret the Shiva Lingam as the symbol of Truth, knowledge, and Infinity.

The Puranas, Indus valley civilization, modern Shiva theology scholars and Saiva devotees interpret different meanings for Shiva Lingam. The Shiva Lingam is a symbol of Goddess Shakthi. It represents the oneness of male (Shiva) energy and Female (Shakthi) energy as a source of creative energy - the Universe.

Early tribes of Indus valley civilization believed the togetherness of Lingam and Yoni in Shiva lingam as the point of entire cosmos energy, creation, and enlightenment. Apart from these varied interpretations and guesses, the Lingam declares the truth that God does not have any definite form, thus makes worship simple. Shiva Lingam is an "AruUruvam" but not a form.

Shiva Lingam can be divided into three parts. The lowest portion symbolizes 'Brahma-Pitha' (the creator), the middle portion symbolizes 'Vishnu-Pitha' (Preserver), and the uppermost represents Shiva pitha (Samhara). The five (5) Pancha-bhutaLingas are Kalahastishwar, Jambukeshwar, Arunachaleshwar, Ekambareshwar, and Chidambaram.

There are three different states of Shiva, namely Aruvam (without form), Aru-Uruvam (Formless form), and Uruvam (With form). Aruva state can be defined with Niramaya or Nirguna state (like vapor). Aru-Uruvam state shifting from one form to another (Like water). Uruvam is a state has a form (like an ice cube). If we can absorb what ancient literature meant the pure science and the imagination that is put up in it is remarkable.

There is a short tale as to what lingam or lingodshaba indicates. Brahma and Vishnu who went in search to find the origin of the universe have only discovered an infinite fire. The quick big bang energy is generated during the formation of the universe. That is when the form of Shiva as

lingodshaba came into existence and is still represented in many temples. Chidambaram-Rahasiyam ("secret of Chidambaram") is a Hindu belief that there is a secret message conveyed through the embossed shrine of Shiva and Chidambaram temple.

FORM OF GOD

Lord Shiva is one of the many names. People believe in God agree without reservation that the Universe exists because of a Creator. Whether Universe came into existence via the Big Bang or as described in various theologies, is a different matter. Despite these differences, all theists believe that God created the Universe of which we are apart.

Most religions agree on the existence of a God but also claim that God is abstract, formless, eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient. The human Mind is infinitely capable as Krishna declares in the Gita. Average people do not endure the infinity that the Mind represents. Therefore, the concept of a formless, abstract, and infinite God is not easy to grasp by the ordinary people.

Other religions try to deal with this problem in their separate ways, via the intermediary of convenient symbolism. In this respect, Saivism is perhaps the most liberal, leaving it entirely to the individual to adopt whatever form the individual wants, and thus conceptualize God. While encouraging the worship of God with Form to develop Love for God, ancient Indian scriptures al-

lating to God directly on a Heart to Heart basis once the spirit of devotion is established firmly in the heart of the devotee.

The MEANING OF THE FORM

The individual mind attributes to the Formless God to a specific Form to easily relate. Many meanings have been given to the significance of the three eyes of Lord Shiva. One eye shows God knows the past; the second eye means God knows the present, but they cannot grasp the history relating to earlier births. The third eye implies God alone knows the future. Shiva has matted hair represents the Lord of breath that is present in all living beings.

The crescent moon has several interpretations; the most notable representation is the progression of time. God is beyond Time and the perfect master of it as well. The drum in the hand of Siva is a symbol of sound, the basis for language.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE GOD

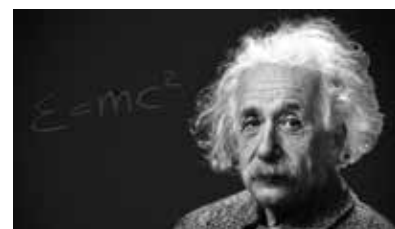
Siva wears the skins of the tiger. The tiger represents the power that pervades the universe; thus, the tiger skin symbolizes mastery over every force. The assignment of qualities is done in such a way as to remind the believer that God is beyond the qualities. By no means - God has endless Forms. He manifests in the Form the devotee wants for, the Form that would grant the devotee the highest satisfaction. In the Bhagavad Gita, God reveals Himself in a terrifying form, which diffuses the whole universe in every kind of life and action. Remember also that

He is within every one of us and we derive strength from Him.

The name Shiva and the specific form attributed to God are useful. We must look beyond the body to the Formless aspect of God. If a person tries to celebrate the natural abilities in a sophisticated way, the technology enables him to show nothing more than a smart animal or even a talented devil. Is the human birth is gifted for this? If we believe that there is a higher and nobler destiny that invites us, then we must seek it and reach that goal. That goal is to realize our inherent Divinity and become one with God.

SCIENTIST VIEWS

The great scientists in the West have also independently come to the same conclusion about Cosmic infinity. Albert Einstein, for example, declared that he pursued Science because it enabled him to have, at least quickly, the mystical experience of Cosmic Infinity. Werner Heisenberg encountered this Cosmic feeling of religiosity and discovered a fundamental principle of quantum mechanics. He felt at the moment of his great discovery that he was looking over the shoulders of God while the Creator wrote the symphony of Creation. Scientist Erwin Schrodinger is another founder of quantum mechanics declared that at the end of the day, he had no choice but to recognize the profundity of the Vedic declaration AhamBrahmasmi – I am Brahman. By the way, both Heisenberg and Schrodinger won the Nobel Prize. Max Planck who in a sense received in the era of quantum physics declared that Consciousness is primary and that matter is second-



Albert Einstein



George Wald



Werner Heisenberg



Erwin Schrödinger



Max Planck



Eugene Wigner



Fritjof Capra

ary, being a material manifestation of Consciousness.

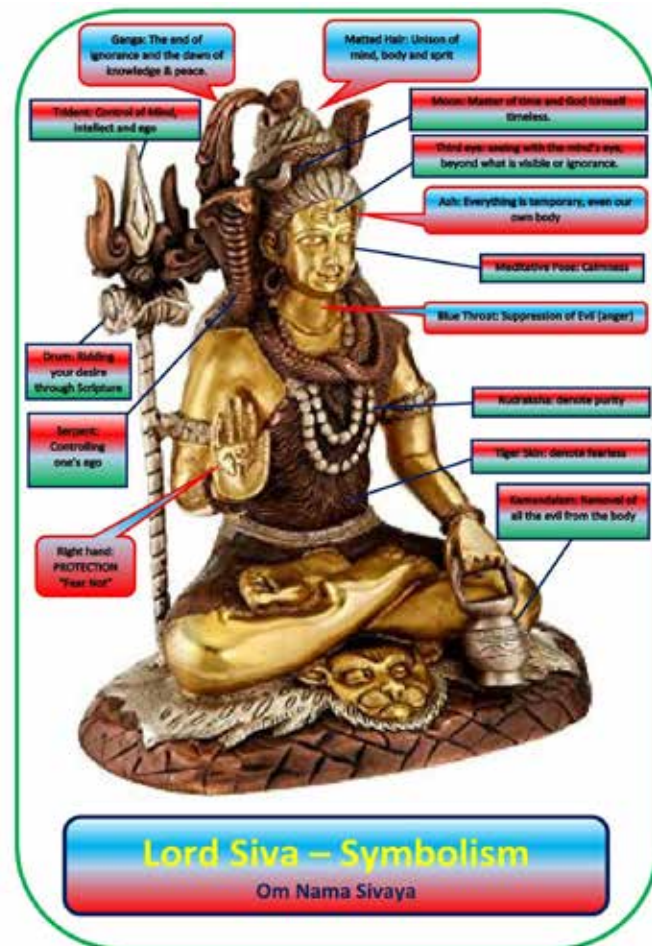
Scientist and Nobelist Eugene Wigner declared that knowledge is complete only when it is registered in Consciousness. Scientist and Nobelist George Wald did not like accepting the idea of Consciousness. He had no choice but to take that Consciousness existed first and from it came to all Creation, the human being the most beautiful flower of this Supreme Consciousness.

More and more scientists are being drawn to the idea of Primary Consciousness from which everything came and Lord Shiva who represents Consciousness, symbolizes the Cosmic rhythm of the Universe. Shiva is the root and support of this universe, and the rhythm of his Cosmic dance is reflected in the atoms and the galaxies of the world. As physicist and scientist Fritjof Capra states,

"Contemporary physics has bestowed that the rhythm of creation and destruction is not only obvious in the cycle of the season and the birth and death of all living beings but is also the very essence of the nonliving matter. For modern physics then, Shiva's dance is the dance of subatomic matter."

CONCLUSION:

Science has limitation and the theory of relativity also under question now. It is another excellent example of science which has weakness and did not give a complete answer to the universal phenomena. At the end of any significant scientific experiment or during the war or incurable diseases, people pray God or leave in the hand of God to take care them. We cannot exceed the Mother Nature including natural disaster. Human needs the support of God to overcome so many challenges including human-made challenges due to hate, greed, anger, and evil act. It is important to note that Tamils played a major role to shape the science, religion, art and spirituality.



ways viewed rituals as a stepping stone to the ultimate realization.

THE COSMIC LORD SHIVA

Worship of God was a detailed process, which took one from regarding God as a great provider to something indescribable, beyond attributes, eternal, and beyond Space and Time. Bhakti is first developed via rituals because they help one to relate personally to God. However, ceremonies are like floatation aids that people are learning to swim first. Once we know how to swim, we can throw away the support. In the same way, we can move to the higher realm of re-



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.



MANAGING YOUR MONEY

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

As an experienced investor, you know that asset allocation is a vital strategy when it comes to assembling and maintaining your investment portfolio. Asset allocation simply means dividing your assets among the different asset classes – stocks, bonds and cash. A sound asset allocation strategy takes advantage of the long-established investing fact that there always has been, and always will be, market volatility but over the long term, markets have historically moved higher.

Diversification is an important aspect of asset allocation. A well-diversified portfolio includes a variety of assets across a number of investment categories. The objective is to smooth out risk by having the above average performance of some investments offset the below average performance of other investments. For this strategy to be effective, the assets in a portfolio must not be highly correlated, meaning that they are not expected to typically move in the same direction at the same time.

Many Canadian investors believe they are achieving adequate diversification by “buying the market” through an instrument such as an index fund. The problem with this approach is that 66% of the S&P/TSX index weight is in

just three sectors: Financials, Energy and Materials – sectors negatively influenced by the ongoing slowdown in global activity. With these currently highly correlated sectors so dominant, it is difficult to offset losses through investments in relatively small, less-correlated sectors such as Healthcare.

So, achieving true sector diversification within the Canadian market is difficult at best. That is why savvy Canadian investors have traditionally sought diversification by investing in various areas of the world. But rather than taking a do-it-yourself, hit-and-miss approach to diversification, many investors are now choosing a dynamic asset allocation strategy.

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WHAT IS CONSUMER PROPOSAL AND HOW IT WORKS

A Consumer Proposal is a deal that the debtor makes with their creditors. This is a legally binding agreement between the debtor and the creditor. This is a way to avoid going to court and avoiding your wages being garnished. These plans are normally set up on a three to five year repayment plan and in some cases the creditor will only make you pay what you owe (minus interest) or a portion of the amount owed. Under this type of agreement; you do not have to worry about the creditors changing their mind later on and demanding more money. In order to be eligible to file one of these Proposals you must be in a financial state where you are able to pay at least a portion of your debts and the debts must be greater than what you own.

Consumer proposal is not like bankruptcy for the following reasons:

- You don't surrender your assets
- You don't declare bankruptcy
- You avoid most of the duties required of a bankrupt like reporting your monthly income and expenses.

Instead, a consumer proposal is a formal debt repayment arrangement



made with your creditors and administered by a Licensed Insolvency Trustee acting as the Consumer Proposal Administrator. You agree to repay a portion of what you owe and your creditors agree to eliminate your total debt once you are finished your proposal. At your initial assessment, the trustee will look at what you own and your income. This determines how much you might have to pay if you were to file for bankruptcy. The trustee will calculate an estimate of what your creditors would receive if you were

to file for bankruptcy. This includes both the value of any assets you would surrender, like equity in your home, and any potential surplus income payments you might need to make if you filed bankruptcy. Your creditors will expect to receive slightly more than that amount in total as a debt proposal so this is the starting point in determining your payment plan.

Then, the trustee will talk to you about your budget. He or she will review your monthly cash flow with you, ignoring your current unsecured

debt payments since these will stop once you file a proposal. From this information, they'll help you determine how much you can afford to pay each month. A proposal is only successful if you can keep up with the monthly payments which is why this is an important part of the process.

With your total payment and your monthly available cash flow in mind, the trustee will help you determine a payment plan. Proposal payments can be spread over a maximum of 60 months. If you can afford more each month, you can shorten your proposal term. You can even offer a lump sum if you have access to money through a relative or potential windfall.

The cost of a consumer proposal is covered by your agreed upon proposal payments. There is no upfront fee and no separate charge. The trustee is paid out of the funds distributed to the creditors.

Contact MARK at 416-489-2000 if anyone needs to clarify any concerns or further information about debts. Also please Refer Page 25 for all the services offered.



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

The Humans of Northern Sri Lanka is currently visiting the diaspora of Northern Sri Lanka, in Canada.



"Kids that grow up here ask me what I think of their romances.

They have no clue of how we conducted our romances back in the day, in Jaffna.

You could hardly see a girl unescorted on the roads or even in her house when we visited.

For one thing, as adolescent boys, we were not supposed to visit houses with adolescent girls in them.

If we had some obscure reason to go still, the girls would run into their rooms before we could make it past their front gates.

The only time this was broken was when there were family weddings. Extended family would come from far and near to stay under one roof - in the house where the wedding would take place.

We boys and girls together were expected to help with the decorations.

In such exceptional cases, the adults relaxed their rules and allowed us to speak to the girls - to ask them to pass the coloured paper or scissors while we 'worked' at the decorations.

Oh how full our hearts were when our eyes connected; even better if our hands brushed, in the passing of the scissors.

Those were the romances of our days. The youths of today have no idea of those decadent thrills."

Like



Note to self:

Dear Thulasi,

Next time you go to Canada, don't stock up on everything from Siddhalepa balm to baby cheramy body lotion to last you through your trip.

They have Sri Lankan run supermarkets with more stuff from Sri Lanka than even Sri Lankans back home can find in one place.

Having the time of my life interviewing Tamil Diaspora over here on what they miss from back home. Nothing but the

weather apparently. They got everything else.

'Do you get Rasavalli (purple yam) over here?'

Diaspora living in Tamil Nadu said they missed that from the mother country.'

Turned around and saw carton loads of purple yam even as I was speaking.

'Do you get the different varieties of banana from back home here? A Tamil lady in London complained she was sick of the one variety of banana usually available at UK supermarkets.'

Got pointed to an aisle full of the varieties from back home.

They have shops selling puttu, stringhoppers, hoppers, mothagam, kadale and ulundu vades... almost as good as home cooked stuff back home. I again don't know restaurants in Jaffna that match that.

Below are banana flowers- an important part of Tamils' diet. You name it. They got it.

Like



Pride of place is given to display of the mother-land in all their sitting rooms

A visual representation of the motherland is a common feature at nearly all the Tamil diaspora homes I have stayed at so far.

Like



Met Srikumar Selvarajah Kanagaratnam only recently but we have been facebook friends for some years now.

Turns out he also narrowly escaped being my father's student at St. John's College, Jaffna.

He had studied there while my father was a teacher but had managed to escape being taught by him.

As he put it to me, Your father was a 'hit first, ask questions later' kind of man. The other English Teacher Alex Thambirajah was a much gentler soul. We all prayed we'd get Mr. Thambirajah instead of

Elderly uncle to her: well back in Sri Lanka, you were hard pressed to even see a girl.

I remember stopping to stare if I saw a girl on a bike, while growing up in Jaffna.

Over here, the women put everything on display and walk around. It's sort of like getting everything free. We don't have to grope for it.

but their demeanor here, is far different from the vibe there.

It's the same people. What's different about the water in Canada?

Public transport in Toronto

Elderly Aunt to me: you can safely use public transport here in Toronto without fearing that the man sitting next to you would try to sexually assault you.

Unlike in Sri Lanka, they have better manners here.

Taking the bus

Took a bus only twice so far in Scarborough, Canada and both times the bus drivers were Tamil.

They guessed I was Tamil before I identified they were.

Both were helpful and professional.

Both spoke to me in Tamil, even though they could speak English too.

Both helped me out with directions and saw to it I was alright.

Wondering now why Jaffna bus drivers, and Tamil drivers in Colombo aren't the same?

Not to say I have never met a helpful bus driver in Sri Lanka,

Considered telling him that men back home grope even worse those women who dress in any way other than the conservatively accepted norm back home. Then decided not to go down that rabbit hole. But here's a message to men back home. Women dress however they want here. And men generally know better than to stare, harass or stalk them. If they can control themselves over here, why can't you?

Mr. Muttulingam.' As my father later told me, Srikumar also married one of my second cousins - so he is a cousin by marriage too.

He saw me get entangled in an online fight with another Johnian some time ago and privately messaged me with some advice:

"Thulasi, there are three kinds of Johnians.

One is the true Johnian.

The second is the vengayam, the onion. (an idiot) The third is the Sanniyan." (Saniyan = Saturn = devil in Tamil culture).

You've got caught to a sannian there. Disentangle yourself from the argument."

My mother found this story hilarious. Since there are many Srikumars known to us, she started referring to him as the Johnian-Onion-sanniyan Srikumar. Over time it has shortened to Onion-Sanniyan Srikumar.

So yesterday he was due to pick me up for a meeting and I was rushing to get ready when my mother called. I tried to put her off.

"Amma, I can't talk now. Srikumar is coming to pick me up."

"Who is this Srikumar?"

"Amma, you know, that guy who married our cousin Tanuja?"

"Which Tanuja?"

"Amma, you know Srikumar, that guy who studied at St. John's?"

"No, which Srikumar?"

"Amma, you know that ONION - SANNIYAN Srikumar!?"

"Oh, that one! OK, I'll ring off now."

I was staying at a cousin's house with an aunt - also his aunt and one very fond of him to boot - pottering about downstairs.

She knew he was coming by to pick me up - I didn't quite know how to explain to her why I called her beloved nephew an onion and a sannian. So I didn't.

I told him instead. It's all his fault after all. And I told him I would be uploading this too.



Tax Conference by Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada

Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada (SAAC) is renowned for its professional development activities for its members and others in the accounting, finance and taxation fields. In the same initiative, SAAC had its Tax Conference on Tuesday, May 15th, 2018 at Sheraton Hotel, Markham. This was a professional development event and it included dinner. The event was a sold out event and well attended by over 100 accountants and finance professionals and business leaders.

Please see below some of the pictures taken at event.



Gowri Rajan wins Management Excellence Award for 'Best Women in Management' (Industry Sector) by the Chartered Institute of Management in Sri Lanka



By Siva Sivapragasam

An outstanding business professional from Kandy, Ms. Gowri Rajan, Director/CMO of Sun Match Company, was awarded the Management Excellence Award for 'Best Women in Management' (Industry Sector) by the Chartered Institute of Management at the inaugural awards for Sri Lanka.

On clinching the accolade, Ms. Rajan remarked: "I dedicate this award to my staff behind the production lines, who manufacture the wax coated safety matches, pack them into the corrugated cartons and then ship the stocks to distributors who make the product available at retail outlets via our dedicated

sales team so that housewives can buy them without a hassle".

Ms. Rajan was the first woman Governor for Rotary Sri Lanka and Maldives to be selected by Rotary International as the top 150 'Service Above Self' awardee. Thereafter, she served many global Rotary projects, including Global President's representative to Australia, Taiwan and India, an honour given by Rotary to a select few outstanding leaders globally.

A World Bank (IFC) and WIM 'Outstanding Career Professional' award winner twice, she also led her organization to many an award from the National Chamber of Commerce and International Chambers for Business as a business person from Kandy in the hill

country. Apart from her business contribution, Ms. Rajan's outstanding passion to serve people was recognized by Rotary International, where she has served in the global committee and continues to do so.

Her Company, Sun Match Ltd. are leaders in the safety Matches industry in Sri Lanka. SOORYA is a trusted household brand in existence for over 40 years and has now gone into contemporary brand extension with the launch of SUN AQUA natural mineral water, SOORYA fragrance incense sticks in several variants. Other business diversification include Haulage, distribution of Holcim Cement, education and imports of industrial chemicals.

Singapore committed to keeping Tamil as an official language, says cabinet minister Iswaran



This undated photograph made available on April 24, 2018 by Singapore Ministry of Communications and information shows who will be Minister for Communications and Information in Singapore. | Photo Credit: AFP

Tamil is one of Singapore's four official languages used in parliament, in schools as mother's tongue subject and supported by print and broadcast media as well as in all other official events. It is also printed on currency notes along

with English, Chinese and Malay.

The Singapore government is resolute in its commitment to Tamil as an official language, Cabinet Minister S. Iswaran has said, citing examples of it being used in parliament and as a subject in schools.

Mr. Iswaran's remarks appeared in an interview published in 'The Tamil Community and the Making of Modern Singapore' -- a book on the South Indian community -- launched by Foreign Minister Vivian Bal-

akrishnan on Sunday.

"The government's policy position and support for Tamil is clear. The rest is in the hands of the community, especially our youths, to embrace the language, use it in everyday life and make it a living language," Mr. Iswaran said.

The book has been co-authored by NRIs Soundara Nayagi Vairavan, editor of 'Online Voice' with five other books to her credit, and A P Raman, a veteran local journalist.

(Courtesy "The Hindu")





Monsoon Kitchen

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.

MUSHROOM RICE

Mushrooms, Kaalaan in Tamil, are a good and cost effective way of including nutrients in your diet. Mushrooms are known to decrease the risk of obesity, diabetes and heart diseases, promotes healthy complexion and increased energy. They are rich in antioxidants, selenium and vitamin D. The potassium levels and vitamin C content all make mushrooms a food group that you should include in your diet, especially when looking for a vegetarian alternative to meat.

Now why the oversell? Because like many people, Niranjini does not like them! Although, she will not disagree that they do have fantastic health benefits. So here is a quick recipe that gives you a substitute to a mushroom stir fry – with the approval of someone who doesn't like mushrooms!



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!

Ingredients:

- Basmati rice (2 cups) – Basmati arisi
- Mushrooms 150 gms- kaalaan
- Butter (50gms)-vennai
- Salt- to taste- uppu
- Jeera – 1 tsp- seeragam
- Vegetable stock- 4 cups

Method:

It's quite complicated, so read carefully... wash the rice and put it in a rice cooker with all the ingredients, turn the rice cooker on and let it cook until it's done! We were actually kidding, this is probably one of the easiest dishes you could make.

If you do not have a rice cooker, add the stock and other ingredients to a pot bring to boil and add in the rice. Cook for 15 minutes on a medium heat, or until your rice is cooked, and your dish is ready. This pairs perfectly with Indian, Thai and Chinese cuisine so take your pick.

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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Liberals have a plan for care and opportunity, and will continue to build Ontario up.

Everything hasn't been perfect in Kathleen Wynne's Ontario.

But 4 years ago Wynne said she would build Ontario up with hospitals, schools and transit, and she followed through:

- ✓ We made prescriptions free for everyone under 25 and over 65.
- ✓ Thousands of students who couldn't afford to go to university or college are now going because tuition is covered.
- ✓ Our unemployment is the lowest it's been in almost 20 years. That's a fact.
- ✓ We raised the minimum wage from \$11.60 to \$15, a living wage.

That's positive change.



On June 7th, Elect Strong Voices to Build Markham Up.



Ontario Liberals delivered five of eight balanced budgets in the last 40 years. We've added 1,000,000 jobs and unemployment is at an almost 20 year low. And we've made historic investments in health care, post-secondary education, and transit.

But there's still more to do. We must continue to invest in care and opportunity for the people of Markham. Ontario Liberals are delivering:

- Prescription drug coverage for children, youth, and seniors
- Drug and dental reimbursement of up to \$700 for a family of four
- Increased funding for local hospitals to deliver better access to care and shorter wait times
- More home care, long-term care beds, and long-term care nurses
- Up to \$750 per year to help seniors with the costs of maintaining their homes.
- Free Child Care for kids aged two-and-a-half to full-day kindergarten
- Access to mental health care workers for students at every secondary school
- Free or reduced college and university tuition
- Faster and more affordable public transportation



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• **Three Divisions:** Primary, Junior and Intermediate.

• **Cash prizes** for the top 3 winners of each division

• **Closing Date** for Registration: **July 31, 2018**

• **Preliminary Selection:** **August 30, 2018**

Panel of Judges: University of Toronto (OISE) Certified Teachers and Noteworthy Members of the Community

Organized by Aparna B. Srikanthan, Hons BSc., MEd.
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June 16th

Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School
8:45AM to 12:15PM (Ages 7 - 12)
12:30PM to 4:00PM (Ages 13 - 18)

To Reserve your Spot
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416.358.3235

For more details Contact:

Head Trainer: Danesh Thirukumaran - dpt18@pitt.edu

Clinic Coordinator: Raj Subramaniam - 416.419.5191

Register with this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/TqiP626Zx8xLxT7V2>



**Coaches and trainers with extensive
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By: Kumar Punithavel

When Shanthi's parents were transferred to Mallavi a village in North Sri Lanka, she was very worried leaving behind all her friends. But on the first day at her new school she met another class mate; a girl in her class whose name was Shanthi too. It took hardly any time for them to chum up. Being a small village they all knew each and every one! Their names being the same one became PeriyaShanthi, meaning big Shanthi and the other ChinnaShanthi meaning small Shanthi, attributing to their size.

They soon became inseparable; seen studying and playing together. When their parents went on holidays on their separate ways, the girls would travel together with them: they shared their parents' too.

But this was not to last, for separation came when Periya Shanthi's father, a government servant got transferred to another district. But the friends kept in touch with one another through letters, as there was neither telephone nor email facilities available at that time. Initially they wrote at least once a month to each other. They would share news with the PeriyaShanthi writing about the new school and the SinnaShanthi about the Mallavi School where they first met. As time passed by, this began to diminish. Finally, it was a mere seasonal exchange of New Year's and Birthday greeting cards with just a few lines scribbled at the bottom. This too stopped when the card sent by PeriyaShanthi came back marked "Return to Sender."

In the devious path of life PeriyaShanthi ended up in Toronto, Canada, and after finishing her studies she worked as a teller at a leading bank. By this time, she had married and had a child too. However, she used to wonder often what her friend was doing and very much wanted to get in touch with her to share news, the usual gossip, and tittle-tattles. She always wondered how she was doing. Is she married? Does she still write Tamil poems like she did at school? All sorts of unanswered self-made queries would flow through her mind. But she did not know the whereabouts of her loving friend SinnaShanthi.

One Friday afternoon she was at the counter of the bank and noticed a



young lady walking into the bank. She looked new to the place and seemed lost. The stranger took her place at the end of the line. PeriyaShanthi began having a gnawing feeling that she knew this newcomer. But she could not recognize any familiarity in her face. The newcomer too kept on glancing at PeriyaShanthi. Probably she felt she must be from Sri Lanka too! The newcomer ended up at the counter next to Shanthi.

When Debby the teller turned to Shanthi and said "She is also from Sri Lanka and her name is similar to yours". PeriyaShanthi's heart started pounding fast. With overpowering excitement, she asked "Are you SinnaShanthi?" There was what looked like a long moment of throbbing silence. Finally, when she said yes, PeriyaShanthi forgot where she was at that moment. She went up and hugged her and instantly both started crying.

All the customers standing around could not understand what was happening. The two had not seen each other for many decades but the love was there and the locked-up feelings flowered in tears soothing their cheeks with warm droplets of emotions. Though they had not had any association for the last twenty years there was uni-

son of feeling which all spurted out to the surface. They were so emotionally aroused they could not speak to each other for a few moments. The silence and tears were so eloquent that there was no need for speech.

Hearing of all the excitement in the bank, the manager walked out and was indeed confused for a moment. He asked both the Shanthys to come into his office. They were deeply ingrained still tearing with emotions.

When he realized all what was happening, he asked PeriyaShanthi to handover her accounts and take the afternoon off. SinnaShanthi sat in the manager's office till her long lost friend came back and they both walked out still in silence holding each other's hand, as if the other may go missing.

On the suggestion of PeriyaShanthi both went to the coffee for a chat. After exchange of information Periya Shanthi observed how truly the great saint poet Thiruvalluvar had said about two thousand years ago in his book couplets 'Thirukkural' had explained how true love acts. Unable to understand Sinna Shanthi asked what her friend meant. She explained that she was reminded of the two couplets Luxmi teacher has taught both of them long ago. Small Shanthi asked which cou-

plets she meant. She replied the two couplets portraying such a situation in Thirukkural are as:

Not association constant, not affection's token bind;

It's the union of feeling friends unites of kindred mind (785)

புணர்ச்சி பழகுதல் வேண்டா உணர்ச்சிதான் நட்பாங் கிழமை தரும்.

and

What bolt can bar true love in fact

The trickling tears reveal the heart.

(71)

அன்பிற்கும் உண்டோ அடைக்குந்தாழ் ஆர்வலர் புண்கணிர் பூசல் தரும்.

Sinna Shanthi said it was very true and always wondered what happened to her friend. Both continued to exchange notes of long lost friends after agreeing to meet the following week end reluctantly separated and went on their way home. This was true love is.

This was the couplet you wanted to know about:

குறள் 666:

எண்ணிய எண்ணியாங் கெய்துப எண்ணியார் திண்ணியர் ஆகப் பெறின.

Couplet 666:

What're men think, even as they think, may men obtain,

If those who think can steadfastness of will retain.

If those who have planned (an undertaking) possess firmness (in executing it) they will obtain what they have desired even as they have desired it.

மு வ உரை:

எண்ணியவர் (எண்ணியபடியே செயல் ஆற்றுவதில்) உறுதியுடையவராக இருக்கப்பெற்றால் அவர் எண்ணியவற்றை எண்ணியவாறே அடைவர்.

சாலமன் பாப்பையா உரை:

ஒன்றைச் செய்ய எண்ணியவர் அதைச் செய்து முடிப்பதற்கு ஏற்ற மனஉறுதியை உடையவராக இருந்தால், அடைய நினைத்தவற்றை எல்லாம் அவர் எண்ணப்படியே அடைவார்.

கலைஞர் உரை:

எண்ணியதைச் செயல்படுத்துவதில் உறுதி உடையவர்களாக இருந்தால் அவர்கள் எண்ணியவாறே வெற்றி பெறுவார்கள்.

New Jersey Based Athletes to Hold Free Basketball Clinic in Markham on June 16

Five athletes from the U.S. will be holding a basketball clinic at Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School in Markham on Saturday, June 16th from 8:45 am to 4 pm in two sessions.

This clinic will help young, local

athletes build a foundation for their skills in regards to shooting, ball handling, footwork, and overall mentality.

DaneshThirukumaran (University of Pittsburgh), Gregory Lee (Susque-

hanna University), Tavian Alford (College of St. Elizabeth), Devante Saintfort (Middlesex College), and Morgan Jones (University of Delaware) are the trainers at this clinic; they have competed basketball train-

ing and participation in teams at U.S. high school and/or collegiate levels.

Number of participants is limited. To reserve your spot please call, Logan Velumailum at 416-358-3235

For more info, please go to Page 38



Texon and the big five

By: Manuel Jesudasan

The luxury coach that was carrying 37 senior Tamils from Toronto, Canada, passing through breathtaking scenic views from Johannesburg, reached the entrance of the Kruger National Park. Four 4X4 open vehicles were in waiting to take the seniors to the Shishangeni Lodge located in the middle of the vast park. From the 37, four groups were created and the seats in the vehicles were assigned according to the age and the mobility and the agility of the seniors. My wife and I were assigned seats on the upper level of the vehicle and, quickly, Monica mastered the art of climbing into the vehicle disregarding the height and never complaining of knee pain. Sathiya sat at the lowest level by the side of the Ranger, Shanthi and Yoga took the seats on the second level and on the third level Pathma, Elavarasi and Lalitha sat comfortably.

A young lad wearing a Khaki uniform introduced himself to us, "My name is Texon. The name of our vehicle is 'Rafiki.' During the time you are going to stay in the park, I will be your Ranger.... I will take you around the park... We will now proceed to your lodge. On our way, if we are lucky, we will sight some of the big five. If I see signs of any one of the big five in a distance from the path, I will drive through the forest to get closer to the animal for you to have a better view."

The first animal we sighted was an impala. We were thrilled having seen an impala for the first time. Hearing some of us make ecstatic sounds at the sight of the lonely impala, Texon said, "not yet... ladies, wait... you will see them in plenty", and within seconds a herd of impalas, males with long spiral and sharp pointed horns and females devoid of horns, were seen being themselves, which again hyped the seniors' excitement. A moment later, Texon stopped the vehicle and said, "I have received a message that a leopard has caught an impala and taken it to the top of a tree.... would you like to go near it and see?" As he was about to turn the vehicle off the path to get close to the leopard, screams came from a couple of ladies... oh!.. no... no... we are scared.... don't go near. But, at the same time some others protested, yes... yes.. let's go see it. The Ranger was confused and as the scream against it was overwhelming, he proceeded on the path towards the lodge. From that moment until we arrived at the lodge we did not see any big ones, but sighted little ones, mostly impalas.



Approximately 30 minutes later, all four jeeps reached the lodge. Occupants of each vehicle had different experiences of the drive to the lodge. All, except us, who had travelled in Rafiki, had driven up to the tree to see the leopard with its prey. They showed photos and videos of the leopard in action. We were told earlier that the importance of going on the Safari was to watch for the big five: elephants, leopards, rhinos, lions and hypos. The talk in town was that one has to be extremely lucky to sight all the five, and obviously, the riders in the Rafiki were disappointed that they had missed out the opportunity to see the leopard. This disappointment triggered a couple of the ladies to decide to change to a vehicle thinking that some in the Rafiki may not venture out to see the big five due to the fear of the animals.

Wake up call was set at 5:30 a.m. on the following morning and the safari was scheduled at 6:30 a.m. Noticing that two ladies were missing in the vehicle, Texon asked where they were, and when he found out that they had gone in a different vehicle, he remarked: "why?... didn't they like me?" This comment touched me. Realizing that we were disappointed in not seeing the leopard, Texon assured, "Guys, I promise you that I will take you around and show you all the big five.... and you have to trust me."

We did not see any of the big five during the morning drive from 6:30 to 8:00 a.m. Where ever we went we saw only the herd of impalas, tower of giraffes, harems of mares and their foals, kudus and wild beasts. Nevertheless, we were energetically active in taking photos and videos of these animals in



their natural habitat, and we admired the nature that was undisturbed by human intervention, except for the for the unpaved road.

The breakfast did not appear to be of any importance, although the spread was scrumptious; specifically catered for the senior Tamils. The conversation was all about as to who saw what. Everyone, however, was disappointed that the big five continued to elude us. All four 4X4s travelled in different directions. The rangers communicated via walky-talky exchanging information, yet the sighting of the animals was never the same for all as the scene changed within seconds.

The safari continued again at 4:30 after lunch. The couple who left us came back to join in the Rafiki happily and also realizing that they were expected to respect the group assignment that was initially chosen by them on their own volition. The ranger and I were the only males in our group. The women started to narrate, rather in loud voices, their autobiographies, and none was second to the other. Texon was not interested in the autobiographies and also as absolute silence dur-



ing the safari was imperative he halted the vehicle for a few moments and explained the rules: "ladies, I use my senses to locate the animals... I need to hear, smell and see the animals....if you talk loud I will not be able to hear them, and also the animals will shy away or if they are close to us may attack us....so, you have to maintain absolute silence during the safari....the second rule isyou must not stand up when you see a big one and most importantly, you must not get off the vehicle." What a co-operating bunch! The vehicle proceeded and shortly thereafter, appeared a mountain belt and mountain valleys at a distance, well illuminated with multi colours by the rays of the young rising sun. "That mountain range is the border between the Kruger National Park and Mozambique", Texon pointed out.

The sheet of darkness slowly started to embrace the sky, and the four jeeps met at one point. A temporary roadside stall was installed and the rangers served refreshments; plenty of South African wine, South African beer and snacks. The groups shared their experiences during the second leg of the day, and the disappointment continued. No signs of the big ones, but the usual ones in plenty. Now the darkness has completely taken over the park. Stars in the sky attempted with good intentions to shed light, but they were too far away to have any impact on the darkness. Various sounds of the animals and melody of the birds all around us were a treat to our ears.

The last leg of the day began. The seniors, who otherwise struggle to walk straight on a paved road, disregarded the height of the vehicle and jumped on it as if they were just in their teens. As an answer to our implied question as to how could we see animals in dark, Texon switched on the powerful spot light while steering the vehicle with one hand and at the same time pointing the spot light into the bushes in all directions enabling us to see the animals. He continued to communicate with the other rangers. The time was 8 p.m. Texon appeared to be excited to receive a message from his colleague, and within seconds what we witnessed cannot be expressed in words to the fullest extent:

A lioness caught an impala by its throat and dragged it into a bush. The impala struggled, kicked and groaned to no avail of help. Within seconds the impala became the legitimate meal for the lioness. Texon drove the vehicle as close as about 10 feet from the lioness and focused the spot light to enable a clear sight. The still cameras continually clicked and the video cameras silently recorded the episode. The lioness was consuming the meat rather hastily as if there was a limitation of time; and the answer to the haste became known when a huge lion rushed to the spot and started attacking the lioness. The Lioness did not want to give up



the fight without a struggle. Growling and roaring of the lion and the lioness lasted for a few minutes and finally, the lioness conceded defeat and walked away with a sad face. The cameras and the video cameras were switched from the fight to the lioness walking away. And later, as we waited quietly watching the lion eat away the meat in a hurry, as if expecting an imminent attack, from a distance came loud roar of lions, and within seconds five massive lions sprinted past a few feet away in front of our jeep towards the lion and the meat. Expecting the invasion of more lions, the first lion dragged the meat and disappeared deep into the bushes while the other five pursued it.

Texon said after witnessing the full episode, "In my 7 years of experience as a ranger, I have never seen such a lion kill." He continued to explain, "it is usually the lioness that kill and the lions eat... the lions prefer buffalo as they can share the meat... impala is small... not enough and therefore the fight among themselves."

Indeed, it was a rare sight for which zoologists spend years in the forest waiting to see. We were at the right place at the right time. Having witnessed the biggest of the big five in ac-

tion and as the time was catching up, we were happy to return to the lodge. It was pitch dark. On our way back to the lodge, Texon brought the vehicle to a sudden halt and quickly put it in reverse and pointed the spot light to his left into an open area with tall dead grass between bushes. This time, a lonely leopard was lying quietly on the soft dead grass using it as a cushion. We sprang into action, the cameras out again. For our amazement, the leopard decided to entertain us, got up from its relaxing position, exhibited its graceful gait, looked straight into our eyes and then quietly walked into the bushes. I captured this little drama with my video, which made my group to proclaim me as a good photographer, which I still doubt, and Sathya voluntarily gave her prime seat in the vehicle to me, in spite of her knee pain, thinking that I could take better pictures.

The safari continued on the following day. Texon's next effort was to sight the rest of the big five: Elephants, Rhinos and hypos. Within a short distance into the park, Texon received a message that an elephant was crossing the path. But, it had already gone deep in to the forest when we reached the area and it was seen only from afar.

Now it was time for some refreshment. Texon set up a temporary stall near a lake, where a crocodile was lying on a rock. He served homemade cookies and hot tea. One of our group members did not know where to dispose the used tea bag. Fortunately, she asked Texon, "Can I throw the used bag into the bushes?" Texon responded quickly leaving aside the task at hand, "No...no... give it to me." He took the bag and disposed it in the garbage bag. His action and demeanour demonstrating his awareness to preserving the clean environment of the park caught my attention.

In the afternoon we were lucky to see and take lots of photos of the rest of the big five: a parade of elephants with many calf at play, feeding on bushes and carving into the trunk of trees with their tusks to tear off strips of bark; a gang of buffalo lazily roaming around; a crash of rhinoceros, both bull and cow, crossing a path and a bloat of hipopotamus dip into the man-made lake and raise their heads for air. With this we were content that the adventure of safari was complete and there was nothing more to ask from Texon. But, he was not still content and was driving around the area of the park that appeared to be untrodden. He received a message that a lioness was spotted. As we reached the spot, we saw the lioness sensually walk towards a tree and without a hesitation climb on it and turn her head in all directions, apparently looking for a prey. To get a clear glimpse of her, Texon stopped the vehicle virtually at the bottom of the tree, which scared Lalitha so much that she whispered, "Won't it jump on us." Her remark was the consensus of the group, although it prompted a giggle.

Texon has delivered his promise to the fullest. We noticed his contentment and joy of his accomplishment. The scheduled program of the safari had finally come to an end and we were on our way back to the lodge when I spotted something that looked like an unusual type of bird hanging on a tree on the side of the path. I asked Texon whether that was a bird. He looked at it for a moment, suddenly stopped the vehicle, got out of it saying that someone has thrown a paper tissue, went up to the tree and removed the paper tissue and brought it back into the vehicle to dispose of it in the designated garbage bin. Again, witnessing Texon's awareness to keep the park clean impressed me and reiterated the truth that unless we, each and every one, become a Texon, we cannot save the earth. The young Texon, undoubtedly, was my hero during my entire time spent in the Kruger National Park. He confessed that he was inspired by his mother to become a ranger and is passionate about his job, which was evident from his patience, respect for people and the willingness to taking the extra steps to satisfy the visitors.

THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple



Community Watch

Report on the Doors Open

by **Sugantha Raj**,
Chairperson, Public Relations
Committee

Saturday, May 12, 2018



This is the fourth year that the Ganesha Temple has been invited to join the "Doors Open Richmond Hill 2018" event, duly held on Saturday, May 12th. It turned out to be an overwhelming success. Listed below are a few reasons for that. The first one being the hugesupport of our community. On the publicity side, Monsoon Journal, a monthly English News Paper, published in Markham, gave a good account of the event in the Special Brochure that they brought out for their 12th Anniversary celebrations, and it was very much appreciated by the Organizers of the event. Due publicity was also given in the Richmond Hill Snapd Paper's web, and the May issue of the Monsoon Journal. Our volunteers also distributed a short information leaflet at all houses near and around the temple area just a day or two before the event which proved to effective, since quite a few visitors mentioned about receiving the note at their places.

Calling this event an overwhelming success itself could be an

understatement, since we had close to 600 visitors as per the volunteers keeping track of those coming in through the basement. Actually our Volunteers were in their place to receive only from 10:30 AM; however, the visitors started coming from 9:30 AM. In addition, quite a number of people came directly to upstairs and their numbers were not included in the attendance count. None the less, we were told by the Heritage Council of the Town of Richmond Hill, theorganizer of this event; that no other heritagecentre is even remotely close to us in the attendance number. This seems to be the highest number of visitors for the Doors Open in Richmond Hill since we started participating.

Also, heart warmingfeeling this time was the number of Special Guests who attended this event at our premises. The list included Hon. Leona Aleslev, MP for Aurora-Oak-Ridges-Richmond Hill (which covers our temple), Hon. Gary Ananandasangaree, MP for Scarborough-Rouge Park, Richmond Hill MP Hon. Majid Jowhari's wife

and children, Hon. Francesco Sorbara, MP for Vaughan, The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and all the six Councillors of the Town of Richmond Hill, the York Region Police Chief, Eric Jolliffe, Inspector Al. Almeida of District #2 (which covers our temple) and both the Liberal and Conservative candidates for the Provincial Parliament for Auror-Oak-Ridges-Richmond Hill (that cover our temple).

As in the past years, Mr. Peter Miller, the Franchise Owner of the McDonalds Store at Bayview Ave, and Major MacKenzie Rd. was kind enough to provide us with Coffee and Soft Drink and our Raghavan provided the variety of baked items. Both were a hit and everyone without exception enjoyed them. Our sincere and grateful thanks are due to them both. Our President, VenuThampi was kind enough to provide beautiful T-shirts to the volunteers and we are thankful to him. Our thanks are also due in no small measure to Vignarajah for making the tasty upma for that occasion. The support of the board is appreciated.

The reason for the outstanding success is purely because of very eager, enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers of all ages. Particularly the younger age group volunteers really made the day not only for us the organizers, but also to all the visitors. The visitors were also given a taste of our traditional BharathaNatyam presented by youngsters and application of Mehndhi/Henna to those who wanted. The credit goes to their dance teachers and their support in this cause. As the saying goes, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating", the comments / opinions /experiences expressed by the visitors in the Guest Book speak for it. Quite a number of visitors also had told us that they would like to bring groups to visit the Temple. The biggest compliment, I thought was from couple of other Religious Centres writing on the Guest Book that they are extremely happy to have us as their neighbours in the Community. If I have to say in one sentence the reason for this success, it is VOLUNTEERS, VOLUNTEERS, VOLUNTEERS.



THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA

Richmond Hill Ganesha Temple



Jeranod-dhaarana Kumbhabhishekahm of the Rajagopuram for Perumal at the Ganesha Temple

May 09 - May 13, 2018

By Kidambi Raj,
Life Member

Kumbhabhishekahm refers to the Hindu ceremony that is performed to consecrate (*sanctify*) a temple. The name alludes to the sprinkling (*abhishekham*) of the temple with the sacred water from the pot (kumbha). The ceremony is done to inaugurate a temple or to re-consecrate it after its initial inauguration. It is to be done at the appropriate time on an auspicious day in a prescribed manner.

The Agama Sastras ordain re-consecration of a temple once in twelve years, called "**Punar-udhaaarana kumbhabhishekham**". Through the redress of difficulties and grievances of the devotees, the inherent spiritual powers of the idols are diminished over a period of time. It is also possible that through unintended deficiencies (*apacharaas*) while conducting poojas, prayers and aaraadhanaas etc. to the installed deities, the idol's energy gets progressively diminished and demands rejuvenation. A Kumbhabhishekham is periodically done to renew the force or power.

At times, major repairs or renovations have to be done after renovation is called "**Jeernod-dhaarana Kumbhabhishekham**".

The severe windstorm of May 4th this year that created lots of havoc around the Greater Toronto Area, also caused damage to one of Kalasams on the Rajagopuram for Perumal at our temple. One of the kalasams had fallen on the roof of the temple just under the Rajagopuram. If some damage like this happens, it has to be fixed as soon as possible at an auspicious day and time. Added to this need, this year's annual Ganesha festival is to start on Monday, May 14th with the Kodi Eatram, which



warranted performing the **Jeernod-dhaarana kumbhabhishekham** before the commencement of the festival.

Following the Agama Sastras they arrived at Wednesday, May 9th and Thursday, May 9th as auspicious time to perform this.

The whole religious rituals started around 6 PM on Wednesday, May 9th with a Nava Kalasa Pooja with an additional Kalasa to be taken up to the Rajagopuram to perform consecration. A powerful Sudharsana Homam was performed ably by Sri Govindaraja Bhattar, joined by other temple priest and a guest priest, Sri Sudarsana Bhattar. The next morning starting at 8:30 AM, they continued more of the Sudarsana Homam, followed by

Suktha Homams. Then the, the Kalasam was carried on the head by Sri Govindaraja Bhattar to the accompaniment of Nadaswaram and Thavil. Once they were outside, Sri Govindaraja Bhattar and Temple Achary Sri Jayaraja went up to the Perumal Rajagopuram by a Cherry Picker. Once up there all the kalasams on the Perumal Rajagopuram, not just the one that fell were all draped with Vastram and malas were put on the kalasams and the sanctified water from the kalasam taken up was used to consecrate all the kalasams and all the proper rituals were fully observed. Once it was done they came down and abhishekham to the Utsava Idol of Sri Venkateswara was performed using the sanctified



water from the Nava Kalasas. The event ended with the distribution of Prasadam (blessed food) to all those present.





A Historic Night for DTA Annual Gala 2018

Durham Tamil Association (DTA) hosted its 1st ever Gala Night on April 21st and turned out to be one of the largest attended event in DTA's history with over 400 people. The guests at the event included representatives from political and municipal levels. It was a time to celebrate DTA's illustrious achievements and to shed light on the future direction of Durham Tamil Association.

The program also included a slideshow of DTA's past, present and future. DTA also had the pleasure of having a video speech from Mayor Ryan.

Kicking off the event was DTA's very own Sarika Navanathan with her rousing rendition of O Canada and Tamil Thai Vaazhthu.

Next, Teacher Kalaimathy Vaggesan of Kalai Natyalaya School of Fine Arts performed a welcome dance in which her dancing prowess gave the audience a deep insight into the intricate art form that is Bharatanatyam. The evening's entertainment started off with a bachata (Latin dance) performance, which also included an interactive lesson for the participants.

This was followed by a scintillating

performance by the Starz dance school – whose costumes and dance moves brought down the house. The gala night also included a performance from the Durham Chinese Cultural Center.

The colourful costumes and music added spice to the evening. DTA was also fortunate to have the famed prima dance school perform one of their signature routines which included DTA's own Thanush Manickvasagar.

The evening also provided a platform for up and coming singers in the Durham region. They performed some melodic songs to captivate the audi-

ence. The evening's entertainment ended with a dance routine choreographed by the dazzling teens of DTA and it was a proud moment for all parents in the audience.

The guests were treated to a sumptuous dinner and beverages. The evening ended with the guests having a fantastic time on the dance floor backed by some rocking tunes by the DJ.

The gala night was a great success and DTA looks forward for next year's Gala with much enthusiasm.

(Contributed by Nanthini Kail)





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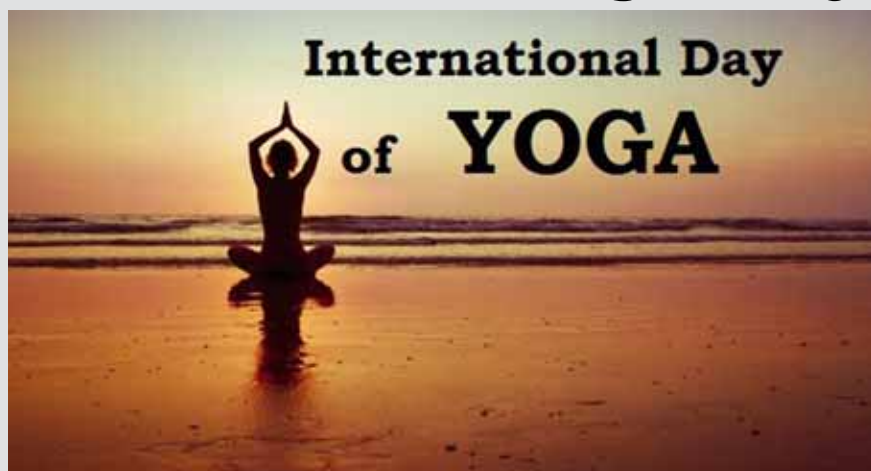




Vedic Cultural Centre, Arya Samaj Markham's children and youth celebrated Mother's Day.
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I met a friend who is ninety-five
Asked how healthy he is keeping:
He said, "I am fit as a fiddle; alive;
By the grace of God and Canada's caring.

I Saw pedagogue emeritus, my fraternity
Seventy-four agile, vigorous, he said,
He had heart problem, hindered his ability.
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I adore you with thankfulness, foster, Ma!
For giving me a new healthy life
From my heart ailment that marred
Me far away from leading a healthy life.

When seniors are considered a burden,
Various handicaps hamper seniors tending.
Canada provides opportunities golden
For seniors, happy healthy living.

Senior citizens look up with much gratitude
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