

# Monsoon

ONE DOLLAR

# Journal

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Emil Alphonsus, CA, CPA, CGA

## Political Crisis Haunts Sri Lanka TNA the "Game Changer"?



The Parliament of Sri Lanka

By Siva Sivapragasam

Sri Lanka, once referred to as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean, is faced with a severe political crisis in its history where two persons are claiming to be the Prime Minister of one country.

Sri Lanka's President Maithripala Sirisena used his presidential powers to remove Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe from his post and appoint former President and SLFP strongman Mahinda Rajapakse as the new Prime Minister about two weeks ago. However, the UNP with its allied parties and other civil rights movements have challenged President Sirisena's action as unconstitutional and against the rule of Law. UNP Leader Ranil Wickremesinghe maintains that he is still the Prime Minister as per the constitution and continues to occupy "Temple Trees" the official residence of the Prime Minister.

Meanwhile, President Sirisena

has prorogued Parliament and it will be re-convened only on November 14th. The Speaker of the Parliament Karu Jayasuriya had met the President and urged him to re-convene Parliament earlier in order that a solution to the crisis can be arrived at. The UNP and its constituent parties insist on a floor test to prove as to which party has a majority in Parliament. They allege that delay in the meeting of Parliament meeting will lead to "horse trading" and cross-overs of MPs. Already, some MPs. from the UNP have crossed over to Mahinda Rajapakse's side.

It appears that the TNA which represents the Tamil community in the North and East and has a sizeable number of MPs. may turn out to be the "game changer" if a vote is taken when Parliament meets for a floor test to prove as to who has the majority. The TNA has officially announced that the removal of Ranil Wickremesinghe from the post of Prime Minister and the appoint-

ment of Mahinda Rajapakse as the Prime Minister was both "unconstitutional and illegal". The TNA has 15 legislators as of now in the 225-member parliament and could play a key role in swaying a no-confidence vote as Rajapaksa and Wickremesinghe now command the support of about 100 politicians each. However, Wickremesinghe's initial majority has dwindled by six members who have switched camps to join the Rajapakse team. A majority of 113 is required to vote a prime minister out.

International pressure from western countries and the U.N. have urged the President to re-convene Parliament immediately to resolve the issue as they fear that civil unrest may take place if the matter is not solved soon.

The coming days will be vital in Sri Lanka's changing political history while the people are kept guessing for results of the present scenario.

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## Santha Panchalingam elected unanimously as President of Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce



By Siva Sivapragasam

Business Entrepreneur, Award Winner, Sponsor of Chamber activities and long-standing member Santha Panchalingam was elected the President of the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce for the year 2018/2019 at the recently held Annual General meeting of the Chamber at JC Banquet Hall.

Contd. on Pg 37...

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# The 2018 National Poppy Campaign

OTTAWA, ON, 26 OCTOBER 2018 – The Royal Canadian Legion National Poppy Campaign is officially underway with thousands of poppies available to Canadians at Legion branches and numerous locations around the country. Volunteers including young cadets are handing out poppies; in all they will help distribute close to 20 million this year.

The 2018 campaign features a new digital poppy, found online at [mypoppy.ca](http://mypoppy.ca). Canadians who donate online will receive a digital poppy in remembrance of a Veteran of their choosing.

“Every fall, the respect and gratitude Canadians feel for the men and women who have served our country is reflected in their generosity during the Poppy Campaign,” says Dominion President Thomas D. Irvine. “None of us must ever forget the price paid for the open and free society we enjoy to-

day.”

The Legion's Poppy Drop on Parliament Hill returns for a third year featuring a spectacular digital light show with 117,000 virtual poppies representing each of Canada's fallen since the beginning of the First World War. The evening display runs from October 26 through to November 11, from 6:30-9:30 pm ET, including until midnight on the 11th. Virtual poppies will also cascade down the National Art Centre's new “Kipnes Lantern” and the “Blades” all day on November 11, from 7:00 am ET to midnight.

During the same time period, two large screens on Parliament Hill show the Virtual Wall of Honour, a silent video sharing the faces of Canadian Veterans who have passed, their photos submitted by people from across the country.

On the first night of the Poppy Drop

each year, Dominion Carillonneur Dr. Andrea McCrady plays “The Last Post” on the Peace Tower bells before the first poppy falls. Those unable to watch in person can tune in to Facebook Live on the Legion's Facebook page, at [www.facebook.com/CanadianLegion/](http://www.facebook.com/CanadianLegion/)

The ceremonial start of the 2018 National Poppy Campaign took place on October 22, with Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor-General of Canada, accepting the First Poppy from Dominion President Thomas D. Irvine.

Funds donated across the country during the National Poppy Campaign support Veterans and their families locally. In 2016, close to 17 million dol-

lars went back into our communities.

November 11, 2018  
Remembrance Day

Thanks to our  
Canadian veterans.

Monsoon Journal extends profound gratitude to members of the Canadian Armed Forces, past and present.

lars went back into our communities.

**About The Royal Canadian Legion**

Founded in 1925, the Legion is Canada's largest Veteran support and community service organization. We are a non-profit organization with a national reach across Canada as well as branches in the U.S., Europe and Mexico. With close to 270,000 members, many of whom volunteer an extraordinary amount of time to their branches, our strength is in our numbers.

- [legion.ca](http://legion.ca)

## Canada strengthens its diplomatic presence in the United States

October 12, 2018 - Ottawa, Ontario: The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs, today announced that the Government of Canada is enhancing its diplomatic outreach to the United States with the appointment of new consuls general, in Detroit and Los Angeles.

The new appointees are:

- Joseph John (Joe) Comartin becomes Consul General of Canada in Detroit (United States of America). Mr. Comartin replaces Douglas George.

- Zaib Shaikh becomes Consul General of Canada in Los Angeles (United States of America). Mr. Shaikh replaces James Villeneuve.

These diplomats will be a part of a network of consuls general with offices in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Miami, Minneapolis, New York City, San Francisco and Seattle (together with trade offices in Houston, Palo Alto and San Diego).

Through direct engagement with the Canadian embassy in Washington,



D.C., the network of consuls general forms a cohesive, integrated team. The consuls general work with provinces, the business community, labour, Indigenous peoples and others to represent and defend Canadian goals and interests.

The new consuls general will play pivotal roles in promoting Canada's interests to our American neighbours and bolstering Canada's presence and profile in key centres in the United States.

- [Canada.ca](http://Canada.ca)

## Flu Shot Now Available - It's easy and it's free

### #FightTheFlu

October 29, 2018: TORONTO - Ontario's Government for the People is encouraging Ontario families to get their free flu shot to stay healthy and prevent hospital visits this flu season.

Today, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, was at Snowdon Pharmacy to get her flu shot.

“The flu shot is the best defence to reduce the risk of getting and spreading the virus,” said Elliott. “The vaccine is available across the province to protect you and your family. By investing in preventative measures like the flu shot, we can help save lives and reduce the strain on our system.”

Getting the flu shot is safe and easier than ever. Every batch of the vaccine is tested using strict guidelines for safety and quality. The shot is available from doctors or nurse practitioners and, in most cases, from local pharmacies or public health units.

To help get the word out, Minister Elliott encouraged colleagues, community leaders and people across the province to get their flu shot and post about it on social media using the hashtag



#FightTheFlu.

The flu shot protects against the most common viruses expected this season. The flu can be passed on before showing symptoms leading to doctor's visits, sometimes hospital stays or sadly, in some cases, death. This makes getting vaccinated against the flu every year an important part of keeping Ontarians healthy.

“Each year, thousands of people across the province get the flu, which puts extra pressure on our hospitals,” said Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health. “When you get the flu shot, it reduces your risk of being seriously ill, taking time away from school, work or spending time with families.”

- [news.ontario.ca](http://news.ontario.ca)

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# from the publisher's desk

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# The Tamil Co-op: Memories and Community

The Tamil Co-op contains a rich history in not only delivering a home made from bricks and mortar to various tenants, but also as an area for developing a sense of community. This has been strongly attested to in a reflection by Manivillie Kanagasabapathy, a former tenant of the co-op, during her time there.

Apart from being a collection of people, events or things, it was a reality in its own right as it was shaped by the tenants' presence. Indeed, Kanagasabapathy was one of the few individuals to witness the co-op come to life during the 1980s. She was there as its library was being established from the assistance of her father and other tenants. Fireworks were lit from the rooftop garden and a 'third-floor' park where tenants like Kanagasabapathy played in. This community would have one another's backs. Every day was an occasion living in a house where a best friend was on a floor below someone and your cousins could be in the apartment room across from yours.

Oftentimes Scarborough has been referred to as 'mini-Jaffna,' based on the sizeable Sri Lankan Tamil community in that area. She would argue that one could first find this in the co-op.

A great many programs and activities came about from the building. It boasts of many firsts for the Tamil community, which include the first Tamil library in Canada, reestablishment of NGO as the roots of Tamil Dance, and language classes. More importantly, it serves as a starting point for the Tamil community in Toronto itself. The building led to her appreciation of Tamil history, culture, dance, drama and as an incubator of ideas, both old and new. There were also informal exchanges in the park on the third floor among her parents and other tenants about their lives in Sri Lanka, Canada, and the co-op itself.

Both informal and spontaneous in nature, these

conversations and debates among the adults in the building, as children and youth like herself listened in, represented what made the Co-op special to Kanagasabapathy.

The community and culture that radiated from this seemingly regular building was even noted by a scholar known by Kanagasabapathy.

"You know it would be very interesting to do a study of the building and the people who lived there. Life has taken them to many places but they all began in that building," remarked the scholar. This building is made up of eight floors, 129 units, a rooftop garden, and a third floor library. This physical structure has seen hundreds of families and produced thousands of memories.

What started out as a form of affordable housing in response to the influx of Tamil refugees because of Black July 83' and the subsequent Sri Lankan civil war has become something more. It has evolved into a shelter that welcomes individuals of various ethnic backgrounds that reflects the multiculturalism that Canada has proudly identified with.

These were sentiments captured by Sinnathamby Sittampalam, a co-ordinator with the housing provider from 1989 to 2005.

The Tamil Co-op is proud to announce that it will celebrate its 30th anniversary on Saturday, November 10 at 20 Wade Avenue in downtown Toronto.

It hopes to continue being recognized as one of the epicenters of the Tamil community and to take in new tenants when necessary to start their life in Canada.

**Contributed by Harrish Thirukumaran**  
 2019 Master of Public Policy Candidate,  
 Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy,  
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Monsoon Journal Wishes  
A Happy Diwali - Deepavali

Happy Thanksgiving to readers  
in the United States  
Thursday, November 22

### November 11, 1918

The First World War ends at six o'clock in the morning; a ceasefire starts at eleven o'clock. More than 650,000 Canadian men and women served overseas during the war. Some 66,000 of them lost their lives on the battlefields, and 172,000 were wounded.

Since 1919, Remembrance Day is observed throughout the Commonwealth, to commemorate the signing of the armistice that officially definitively ended the bloody conflict and to remember those who fought for our country. Every November 11, two minutes of silence mark the eleventh hour, in memory of fallen soldiers.

## Canada Historical Milestone



“Greatness never a given. It must be earned.” - Barack Obama (b: August 4, 1961) 44th President of the United States, He was elected 10 years ago, on November 4, 2008.

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

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# Canadian Armed Forces personnel arrive in Europe to support commemorations for 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the First World War

November 4, 2018 – Ottawa, ON: A 200-member strong Canadian Armed Forces' (CAF) contingent has arrived in Lille, France to join and support the Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) – led Government of Canada official delegation in France and Belgium to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

Canadian representatives in Europe will participate alongside international hosts and partners to mark the anniversary of the Armistice and celebrate Canada's contribution to the restoration of freedom and peace in Europe a century ago. Highlights of the week-long programme include:

**Friday, November 9, 2018**

Armistice Candlelight Ceremony, Canadian National Vimy Memorial.

**Saturday, November 10, 2018**

Private George Price Monument inauguration ceremony, Le Roeulx, Belgium.

**Sunday, November 11, 2018**

Ville de Mons Liberation Parade



and commemoration ceremony, Mons, Belgium.

The deployment is part of Operation DISTINCTION, the CAF contribution to the Government of Canada's commemoration program.

"The courage and valour of those who served in the first half of the 20th century is reflected in the continued tradition of service by today's members of the Canadian Armed Forces. The

young men and women I have the pleasure of commanding on operations, at home and around the world, are from the same stock and have the same strength of will and values as those whom we honour. We will not forget their sacrifices", Lieutenant-General Michael Rouleau, Commander of Canadian Joint Operations Command said on this anniversary.

**During the First World War:**

- More than 650,000 men and women from Canada and Newfoundland served during the First World War. More than 66,000 gave their lives and over 172,000 were wounded.

- Approximately 70 Canadians were awarded the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous bravery in the presence of the enemy" during the First World War.

- The last soldier of the British Commonwealth killed in combat during the First World War was Canadian, Private George Lawrence Price. He was fatally shot by a sniper two minutes before the Armistice on 11 November 1918.

- Canada's Hundred Days is the name given to the offensive campaign undertaken by the 100,000 strong Canadian Corps that contributed to the Allied victory. It began with the Battle of Amiens, France, on 8 August and concluded with the Canadians liberating the Ville de Mons on 11 November 1918.

- [canada.ca](http://canada.ca)

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# 'United against hate':

## UN chief and religious leaders honour victims of Pittsburgh synagogue shooting

October 31: More than 200 people gathered at the historic synagogue on Manhattan's Upper East Side, including local leaders of different faiths and denominations, who joined diplomats and others to call on all communities to stand "united against hate".

The deadly mass-shooting by a lone gunman at the Tree of Life synagogue, in the US city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, during Sabbath celebrations, left 11 people dead and six wounded.

"Since I became Secretary-General I have been raising my voice against what I believe is the rise of anti-Semitism in many of our societies, and mainly in my part of the world in Europe, but also importantly in North America" said Mr. Guterres, as he denounced Saturday's "horrendous act."

Citing other forms of anti-religious hatred being witnessed today – including against Muslims and Christians worldwide – he noted that anti-Semitism is the "oldest and more permanent form of hatred" to have endured "in the history of humankind".

Calling for a "strong investment in the social cohesion of societies", he stressed

the responsibility of leaders of international organizations, political parties, religions and civil-society organizations, to "address the root causes that are undermining" this cohesion and "creating conditions for these forms of hatred to become more and more frequent, and more negative in the way they are expressed."

The remembrance, titled "United against hate," opened with a rendition of the song "Ose Shalom" – which means "make peace" in Hebrew – by the Park East Day School children's choir.

The synagogue's Senior Rabbi, Arthur Schneier, a Holocaust survivor whose family was killed in the Auschwitz Nazi death camp, stated in his opening remarks: "I have been through the worst. I have seen the best of Man and the worst of Man, and the best of Man will prevail."

Sheikh Musa Drammeh, Chairman of the Islamic Cultural Center of North America said that "it is time for this nation to rise to the occasion and to make this union a more perfect union and to prohibit hate."

The UN Secretary-General, who previously headed the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, noted he had worked closely



Wearing "United Against Hate" t-shirts appear at an interfaith gathering at the Park East Synagogue in New York City in memory of Jewish worshipers who were killed in Pittsburgh in the United States. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas (31 October 2018)

with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) during that time, and had tremendous respect for its work. The Tree of Life Congregation's support for HIAS, was one of the factors which drove the anti-Semitic gunman to target the synagogue.

"They are a true expression of humanitarianism, but also of humanism and solidarity," he said, regretting that the alleged perpetrator of the attack chose to target an organization that "is the sym-

bol of everything [he considers] good in the world".

Other faith leaders in attendance, expressing their common rejection of all forms of violence, intolerance and anti-Semitism, included Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York; Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; and Archbishop Auza, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

- via UN.org

# UN agency assists Central American caravan migrants, voices concern for receiving countries

Nov 3, 2018: The United Nations Migration Agency, International Organization for Migration-IOM, is providing support and assistance to migrants crossing Central America in several self-styled caravans, while expressing concern over "the stress and demands" they are placing on host countries.

In the Siglo XXI Migratory Station of Tapachula, Mexico, IOM and the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Affairs are supplying food and basic hygiene kits to over 1,500 migrants seeking asylum in the country.

IOM said on Friday that after walking some 850 kilometres from Honduras, exhaustion and the challenges ahead have caused many to opt for voluntary return, offered by Mexican authorities and Honduran consular officials.

"IOM maintains its position that the human rights and basic needs of all migrants must be respected, regardless of their migratory status," said Christopher Gascon, UN Migration's Chief of Mission in Mexico.

In coordination with UN refugee agency UNHCR, he said "we will continue to monitor the situation of the caravan counting on field staff,

the Mexican Office of Assistance for Migrants and Refugees, and partner NGOs, providing information regarding alternatives for regular and safe migration, as well as options for voluntary returns," he added.

Counting on its Mesoamerica Program – funded by the US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration – IOM is now also able to provide voluntary return assistance to migrants.

"The caravan phenomenon in Central America is another expression of a migration process that the region has been facing for quite some time," Marcelo Pisani, IOM Regional Director for Central America, North America and the Caribbean explained, saying the "mixed migration flow" was driven by economic factors, family reunification, violence and the search for international protection.

"Nevertheless," he added, "we are concerned about the stress and demands that caravans place on the humanitarian community and the asylum systems of receiving countries, which ultimately have limited resources to face this challenge or to properly care for and protect migrants."



The first caravan of Central American migrants reached the town of Matías Romero in Oaxaca state on November 1, 2018. The Mexican Secretary of Foreign Affairs estimates that 4,000 people spent the night there—pic IOM / Rafael Rodríguez

According to local authorities, on Monday the Mexican government admitted a second caravan of approximately 1,800 Central Americans who initially started the regularization process, but later opted to continue the trek north without seeking asylum; a third caravan of around 500 Salvadorians crossed in on Tuesday, where most requested asylum; and a fourth group of some 1,700 individuals spent Thurs-

day night in the Guatemalan town of Tecún Umán, on the border with Mexico.

"The effective protection of human rights for all is based on the respect of processes conveyed in international treaties and national laws, which must be the frame of reference for any action that may be implemented in this situation," Mr. Pisani concluded.

- UN.org





## Canada concerned by political situation in Sri Lanka

October 29, 2018 - Ottawa, Ontario  
- Global Affairs Canada

Global Affairs Canada today issued the following statement on the ongoing political developments in Sri Lanka:

"Canada remains deeply concerned by the political situation in Sri Lanka. We reiterate our call for all parties to refrain from violence and respect due process and the rule of law.

"Canada calls on President Maithripala Sirisena to immediately reconvene Parliament and rescind the decision to prorogue. The people of Sri Lanka deserve transparency and accountability. The Parliament of Sri Lanka—whose representatives have been duly elected by the people of Sri Lanka—must be



afforded their constitutional responsibility to determine Sri Lanka's prime minister.

"We also call upon the government to ensure the safety and security of journalists, activists and human rights defenders, who play a vital role in defending democracy." - [via: canada.ca](http://via:canada.ca)

## Hindu Newspaper Group Chairman N. Ram receives Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award

By Siva Sivapragasam

Veteran journalist and The Hindu publishing group chairman N. Ram has been chosen for the prestigious Raja Ram Mohan Roy Award, presented by the Press Council of India (PCI), for his outstanding contribution towards journalism, the Council announced.

The award will be presented on November 16 on the occasion of the National Press Day.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a founder of the Brahma Sabha, the precursor of the Brahmo Samaj, a socio-religious reform movement in the Indian subcontinent. His influence was apparent in the fields of politics, public administration, education, and religion. He was known for his efforts to abolish the practices of Sati (Sati or suttee is an obsolete funeral custom where a widow immolates herself on her husband's pyre or takes her own life in another fashion shortly after her husband's death.) and child marriage. Raja Ram Mohan Roy is considered by many historians as the "Father of the Indian Renaissance." In 2004, Roy also received placement in a BBC public poll to determine the "Greatest Bengali of



all time".

Narasimhan Ram is an Indian journalist and prominent member of the Kasturi family that controls The Hindu Group of publications. Ram was the Managing-Director of The Hindu since 1977 and its Editor-in-Chief since 27 June 2003 until 18 January 2012. Ram also headed the other publications of The Hindu Group such as Frontline, The Hindu Business Line and Sportstar, and has been awarded the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India and Sri Lanka Ratna by the Government of Sri Lanka. He is referred to as a left-wing editor.

Subsequent to changes in the Editorial & Business of 'The Hindu' on 21 October 2013, N. Ram has become Chairman of Kasturi & Sons Limited and Publisher of 'The Hindu'.

## Political incitement to violence against journalists is 'toxic': UN experts

31 October 2018: A group of independent, UN-appointed human rights experts have called on world leaders to stop inciting hatred and violence against the media, citing the hundreds of journalists killed or forcibly detained because of their work, and ensure that those responsible are held accountable.

On Wednesday, the experts, including David Kaye, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Agnes Callamard, Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; and Bernard Duhaime, Chair of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, released a statement ahead of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists, on 2 November.

The statement said that "these last weeks have demonstrated once again the toxic nature and outsized reach of political incitement against journalists, and we demand that it stop," and strongly urged States to take firm steps to ensure accountability for violence and attacks against journalists, reversing and resisting the appalling trend of impunity."

They particularly highlighted the killing earlier this month of Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi, and condemned the response of States, the international community and the United Nations itself, for the failure to address his enforced disappearance and apparent murder.

"The only way forward is to establish an independent, transparent and credible investigation into his murder, one authorised by and reporting to the United Nations. Anything short of a complete investigation, recognised as such by the international community, will make a mockery of government claims of commitment to the safety of journalists."

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) says that, between 2006 and 2017, over 1,000 journalists were killed for reporting the news and bringing information



**Jamal Khashoggi**  
(13 October 1958 - 2 October 2018)

to the public; an average of one death every four days.

In nine out of ten cases the killers go unpunished, and this impunity, say the UN experts, triggers further violence and attacks: perpetrators must be brought to justice, and victims and families should have access to remedies.

High-level international commitments already exist, such as a resolution on the safety of journalists, adopted by the Human Rights Council in September. The UN experts called on world leaders to implement such resolutions and end their role in inciting hatred and violence against the media.

On this year's International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, UNESCO is launching a new campaign, Truth Never Dies, to raise awareness of this situation, and is calling for media partners to support the initiative by publishing stories by, and about, journalists killed as a result of their work. A toolkit is available for media that wish to take part.

- [via: UN.org](http://via:UN.org)

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BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

# HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA

“Humans of Northern Sri Lanka” is a Facebook Community page by Thulasi Muttulingam, a journalist based in the North of Sri Lanka. To follow the updates, “Like” the page at: [www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Humans-of-Northern-Sri-Lanka)

## Loudspeakers; God's voice or man's voice trumpets?



I am juggling three part-time jobs at the moment, one of which is journalism for which I write from home. Finding a quiet moment to finish my work is never easy so I have learnt to write in everyday noisy environments.

Recently however, even my relatively high noise tolerance was broken. A nearby temple started blaring Hindu Tamil songs into my neighbourhood in Jaffna.

And when I say blaring, I mean BLARING. I could not hear myself think, much less write. This was late at night so I went to bed, hoping to be up early in the morning to finish my work before getting to my other day job.

Unfortunately, the temple had just been testing its sound systems the previous night it seems. I was up at five in the morning. The temple loudspeakers started blaring away at 5.30. I called the police at 6.30; they promised to show up soon but didn't.

I left for work, my sister who works from home called the police at 11.30 - they again promised to show up - and didn't.

I got back home at 6.00pm and called the police again at 7.00 pm. Repeat performance - they promised to show up but didn't. The blaring finally stopped at 9.30 pm in the night - after a continuous assault on the neighbourhood's ears for 16 long hours.

This issue has been written about ad nauseum for years now. It's a prevalent problem in our country, yet our statesmen appear to be wary of handling even this minor and easily settled a problem. Why? Do they not have mainstream support?

Even the sweetest of religious chants will sound like a blaring nightmare if broadcast at extremely high decibels over loudspeakers into the neighbourhood. Even the faithful are fed up with it in large numbers now.

Using loudspeakers in institutions of worship is a relatively new phenomenon that came into use only over the last two decades. Before that, only mosques were known to do it and they actually have a religious duty to, unlike the rest of us. The muzzein's call to prayer has

to be broadcast far and wide to call their faithful to prayer. I remember the days when people used to complain this was too much to take, even though the azaan (muslim call to prayer) took less than two minutes. I have lived near mosques however and used to roll my eyes when people complained. Hearing something over the loudspeaker for two minutes (even if five times a day - that's still 10 minutes in 24 hours) is not going to kill anybody. Deal with it.

If a religious exception for loudspeakers needs to exist at all, I would say it's for Islam, as this is something they have practiced for centuries as a religiously mandated duty. Most mosques have also calibrated their sound levels to waft mellow notes into homes, not ear splitting shrieks.

As for the rest of us however, what's our excuse? Our ancestors managed just fine without shrieking their faith into other people's ears. In fact as per Buddhist and Hindu strictures, I would even say, this practice is religious anathema. We are enjoined not to be a nuisance to others in our acts of worship.

Yet after complaining for decades about mosques, nearly all our religious institutions, pansalas, kovils or churches do it at much worse levels over unsustainably long hours - beginning and ending at the most ungodly of hours. Can't the temple management at least let us sleep? We need those precious few hours of rest to sustain our rat race lives.

### The Complaints

People do complain, but I notice they complain (more) against other religious institutions than their own. The Hindu will complain about the Church, the Christian will complain about the Pansala, and the Buddhist will complain about the Mosque. And when our own do it too, the answer is, “Well they are doing it too,” or “they started it first.”

So if some other institution is engaging in active noise pollution, the rest of us have to, also? Whatever happened to the concept of learning from others' mistakes?

And let's not forget that ultimate of Islamophobic trump cards: “Well, tell the mosque to stop doing it first then. How come you never question the Muslims?”

Yep, whatever our religious diversity, we are nearly all united in our Islamophobia. If the mosques are blaring for five hours a day or more, that needs to be addressed too - but as far as I can tell, they are now the least offensive of the religious institutions' cacophony, with their compulsory two minute call to prayer. But sure, blame the Muslims for all our collective bad behaviour. Works every time.

### Fear of Blasphemy

There appear to be other significant reasons than just insularity towards our own and bigotry towards other communities, fueling our unwillingness to question our own religious institutions.

In my own neighbourhood, it was fear of blasphemy. People feared incurring the temple deity's wrath if they were to complain - so they put up with 16 hours of ear splitting noise at a stretch. Standing behind the deity, using Her power however, is a man - a new businessman in the area, determined to prove his social superiority - and taking over a relatively minor temple, upgrading it significantly, and doing a full day's worth of mega pujas in it in his family's name is one way of doing it. He is the only one who requires loudspeakers for his puja - so his name can be broadcast far and wide repeatedly into the neighbourhood - yet people fear to complain citing blasphemy charges.

I suppose I should count my blessings. At least this fear of blasphemy is only in our own minds at this stage. Thank goodness it is not an institutionalised concept in our country.

Irritated as I am with the police, I supposed I still have to be grateful they just fobbed off my calls instead of arresting me on blasphemy charges - as can happen still in some countries. In Indonesia right now, a woman is in jail for complaining about the loudspeakers of mosques in her neighbourhood. We can't breathe easy on this however. We too have a state religion and although

a thoroughly peaceful one in print, the BoduBalaSena, RavanaBalaya and co seek to make us the Saudi Arabia of Buddhism. I have heard firsthand reports of people complaining about Buddhist religious institutions' loudspeaker use getting into far more serious trouble, both with the state apparatus and the neighbourhood. One wonders what the Buddha would make of all this?

Let the Gods deal with it?

I recall here the story told by one particularly feisty Catholic lady in Mannar who lived next to a Hindu Amman (goddess) kovil. “Every day, they would blare songs of the type meant to rouse you into a frenzy (amman songs and mode of worship is known for this. People literally do go into frenzies during her worship).

It got to the point where I literally was in a frenzy everyday - but I did not dare complain as a Christian about a Hindu temple. There were enough religious divisions in my neighbourhood and I didn't want to help fuel it.

I initially considered praying to Jesus to solve the problem - but then thought better of it. He would have to take up the problem with the Amman and what if our Gods then got into conflict over the matter in heaven?

“So I decided to appeal to the Amman deity herself. She is said to be very powerful. I went and lit a camphor at her altar and begged her to resolve the issue as I could not live with the blaring noise emanating from her temple everyday. The temple loudspeaker promptly broke down. They got down another one but that broke down almost immediately too. The temple management then came to the conclusion that the deity did not want loudspeakers for her temple - so they stopped using it. Always appeal to the Gods. It works.”

As good a strategy as any I suppose. In the face of our elected representatives too spineless to take a stand, and our state apparatus including the police taking bribes to ignore the problem, we might as well appeal to our Gods to solve the problem. So far though, their voices are ominously silent. While the loudspeakers continue to blare on their behalf.





# 'We must work together like never before' to realize sustainable development, says Canada at UN

October 1: Addressing world leaders at the Assembly's annual debate, Marc-André Blanchard, chair of Canada's delegation called on the international community to find opportunities amidst challenges it confronts.

"We have to find new ways of doing things, for silos to be broken between Governments and civil society; between Governments and the private sector; between North and South; and between the traditional so called like-minded and non-traditional like-minded."

In particular, the response to climate change offers potential for new technologies, representing a 26 trillion-dollar opportunity, said Mr. Blanchard

"To harness this opportunity, starting with the most vulnerable, small island States, we must all work together with scientists, multilateral institutions, regional banks, investors, and civil society like never before," he urged.

In his address, the Canadian official spoke of the priorities of his country's

G7 presidency, including its focus on strengthening climate resilience and disaster recovery.

He went on to inform the General Assembly of the North American nation's participation in UN peacekeeping efforts, highlighting the "Elsie Initiative" – a practical plan to double the number of women in peacekeeping operations.

"We know that having women in the ranks – and in charge – makes peacekeeping more effective and its results more durable," said Mr. Blanchard.

Turning to crises around the world, the Canadian official reiterated that his country's actions remain guided in its commitment to protect and promote human rights, citing a recent unanimous motion adopted by Canada's parliament calling on the Security Council to refer crimes against the Rohingya people to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Concluding his address, Mr. Blanchard announced Canada's candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the



**Marc-André Blanchard, Chair of Delegation and Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN, addresses the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly- UN Photo/Cia Pak**

Security Council for 2021-22, recalling the country's "proven record" of working with other UN Member States to new ideas and approaches to tackle complex problems of international peace and security.

"If elected to the Security Council,

we will bring to bear our longstanding dedication to peacekeeping, our over thirty years of service as Chair of the UN's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and our active membership on the Peacebuilding Commission," he said. – via UN.org

## U.S. Ambassador Teplitz Presents Credentials to President Sirisena

COLOMBO, November 1: Ambassador Alaina B. Teplitz officially began her tenure as the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka today after presenting her credentials to President Maithripala Sirisena. The ceremony was held at the President's official residence. Ambassador Teplitz was accompanied by her husband, Robert Saul.

"I am honored to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka at this critical moment for the country and region. For seven decades, the United States has supported Sri Lanka on its path to peace and prosperity. I look forward to joining you on this journey as we work together to address the challenges and seize the opportunities that lay ahead to ensure a safe and thriving Indo-

Pacific region. Together, we can help ensure a future in which democracy empowers the people and all rest assured of respect for human rights," said Ambassador Teplitz.

Ambassador Teplitz served as U.S. Ambassador to Nepal from 2015-2018. A career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister Counselor, she joined the State Department in 1991. She was the Director of the Under Secretary for Management's Office of Policy, Rightsizing, and Innovation (M/PRI) from 2012-2015, where she identified innovative ways to improve how the U.S. diplomatic service operates and championed efforts to enhance knowledge management, data use, and risk management. Prior to



leading M/PRI, Ambassador Teplitz was the Minister Counselor for Management at U.S. Embassy Kabul from 2011-2012. She directed a team providing oversight for U.S. Government

Chief of Mission civilian activities in Afghanistan and planned for the impact of the eventual military force reduction.

– via: [lk.usembassy.gov](http://lk.usembassy.gov)

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# Tobacco control measures are working, but too slowly in less-developed countries: WHO

October 1: At an international meeting on tobacco control in Geneva, the WHO reported that nearly two-thirds of the 181 States parties to the WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) have developed strategies "to prevent tobacco industry interference with tobacco control policies".

As a result of the treaty, countries have increased taxes on tobacco, established smoke-free spaces and made it obligatory for manufacturers to show graphic health warnings on their products, as well as using plain packaging.

Despite these advances, "this is not a time to be complacent," said Dr Vera Luiza da Costa e Silva, head of the WHO FCTC Secretariat. "With astronomical budgets, the tobacco industry continues its furious efforts to undermine the implementation of our treaty."

According to the WHO 2018 Global Progress Report, 85 per cent of the States parties have prohibited sales of tobacco products to minors and a growing number of countries have increased the minimum age to purchase tobacco products.

Health warnings on tobacco packs are also required in almost 90 per cent of States parties and at least 14 countries "are implementing or planning to implement" plain or standardized packaging.

In addition, tobacco-dependence diagnosis and treatment services are included in national tobacco control programmes in more than two-thirds of the Parties; significant progress, compared to just one half in 2016.

But there is still room for improvement, the report notes, particularly in banning self-service shelves for cigarettes, and vending machines, while also highlighting the emergence of new and novel tobacco products.

The WHO report - a publication based on national submissions to the Convention Secretariat - also indicates that implementation of tobacco control measures has consistently improved since the accord entered into force in 2005.

Nonetheless, progress towards implementation of the various articles remains uneven, with rates as low as 13 per cent in some countries, and as high as 88 per cent in others, the data shows.

To illustrate the scale of the challenge still facing States parties to the Convention, the head of the UN in Geneva, Michael Møller highlighted the fact that there are 1.1 billion smokers today; 80 per cent of whom, live in low- to middle-income countries.

The burden this creates is immense, in terms of health costs caused by tobacco-related sickness, the UN Geneva Director-General said, before calling for the need to link tobacco control measures with sustainable development strategies.

"Smoking is a development problem because it hits the most vulnerable and strains already overstretched health systems, feeding a vicious cycle of poverty

and inequality," Mr Møller said.

"Reaching the 2030 Agenda and lessening the burden of non-communicable diseases requires early, widespread action at every level."

Also speaking at the Eighth Session of the WHO FCTC Conference of Parties in Geneva on Monday, UN health agency chief, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, hailed the tobacco control convention as "one of the greatest public health achievements of the past 20 years".

Several countries including Kenya and Uganda have passed comprehensive tobacco control laws in recent years, he said, while Gabon and Gambia have increased tobacco taxes.

Elsewhere, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand have introduced large graphic health warnings, the WHO Director-General continued, before highlighting that many countries have banned smoking in public places, from Afghanistan, to Cambodia and El Salvador.

Several cities in China have implemented smoke-free laws, Mr. Tedros said, adding: "We have made great progress. We have saved lives."

In line with previous trends, the most successfully implemented tobacco control



A man smokes a cigarette at a road side rest stop in rural Nepal  
-pic: World Bank/Aisha Faquir

policies have been in protection from exposure to tobacco smoke (Article 8), Packaging and labelling of tobacco products (Article 11), public awareness (Article 12) and sales to and by minors (Article 16).

Implementation has been less successful on protecting the environment and the people's health (Article 18), Liability (Article 19) and support for economically viable alternative activities (Article 17).

On the issue of increased tobacco taxation or over-the-counter price increases, the report also notes that significant ad-

vances have been observed among States parties, with more than 90 per cent now implementing the initiative.

The same percentage have also banned smoking in public all places, the report says, noting that "a considerable number" have also shared their experience with other States on extending smoking bans to outdoor environments, and on amending existing smoke-free legislation to incorporate new tobacco products.

- via UN.org

## Japan, India Leaders Agree to Step Up Defense, Economic Ties

TOKYO — October 28: The leaders of Japan and India agreed Monday to step up their cooperation in defense, trade and a range of other areas amid China's growing influence in the region. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, said they are expanding ammunition sales and high-level defense talks and joint military exercises.

"Relations between Japan and India have the biggest potential in the world," Abe told a joint news conference after holding talks with Modi. "A strong Japan benefits India and a strong India benefits Japan."

Modi, through an interpreter, responded, "Without India-Japan cooperation, there will be no development in Asia into the next century."

India is one of the countries that Japan has reached out to form defense partnerships, as Tokyo seeks to expand its military cooperation beyond its traditional alliance with the U.S. amid China's increasingly assertive military presence in the region.

Japan in recent years has stepped up defense ties with Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines and other Asia-Pacific nations.

Abe and Modi welcomed joint exercises by their ground, sea and air forces and the start of negotiations toward an



acquisition and cross-servicing agreement, or ACSA, which would enable sharing of supplies and ammunition between the two militaries as a way to "enhance the strategic depth of bilateral security and defense cooperation."

They also signed a second-phase agreement for a Japanese super-express railway project in India.

Their meeting came immediately after a trip by Abe to Beijing, where he met with Chinese leaders, showcasing their improving relations. The Asian neighbors agreed to cooperate more in areas of common interest and concern.

Modi has called for regional unity against protectionism. He arrived Saturday and was invited to Abe's vacation house near Mount Fuji on Sunday for

private talks.

Concerns about China's expanding influence on the regional economy and U.S. trade policy are also bringing Japan and India closer in their economic ties.

The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to achieve a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Abe pledged low-interest loans worth 316 billion yen (\$2.8 billion) for seven infrastructure projects in India. Half of the amount would be allocated to the railway project in western India using Japan's "bullet train" technology, according to the signed documents.

Japan and India also discussed joint infrastructure projects in the region, including Sri Lanka. - VOA News



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# Markham Stouffville Hospital names cancer clinic to recognize builder's transformational gift

MARKHAM, ON (October 31, 2018) – Hundreds gathered at Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) on October 30 to celebrate a substantial seven-figure-gift made by Shakir Rehmatullah, President & Founder of Flato Developments Inc. In recognition of this monumental donation, the hospital proudly named and officially unveiled — The Shakir Rehmatullah Cancer Clinic.

“A hospital is fundamental to any community, and in times of a medical crisis, there’s nothing more reassuring than knowing your hospital has the right equipment, facilities and doctors,” said Rehmatullah. “Anybody who cares for the community should look after the hospital, because we’re all going to need it someday.”

Ontario Premier Doug Ford along with

many national, provincial and municipal dignitaries including Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti were present to honour Rehmatullah’s tremendous gift. Hospital staff, physicians and patients were also on-hand to celebrate the extraordinary gift and witness the unveiling of the newly named cancer clinic. The donation was made in honour of Rehmatullah’s father, also a philanthropist, who passed away from cancer shortly after the family arrived in Canada.

“Today we celebrate his legacy, your family and the amazing kindness that you’re showing to Markham Stouffville Hospital,” said Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti. “After all, great medicine cannot exist without kindness.”

Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation added, “There are simply no words

strong enough to express our sincere gratitude to Shakir for sharing our vision to make Markham Stouffville Hospital a provincial leader in healthcare.”

While the money supports the hospital as a whole—including the purchase of life-saving medical equipment and innovative technology—it will also fund the oncology department’s patient care initiatives. With a chemotherapy clinic, breast health centre, pain and symptom management clinic, colon health services and radiation consultation services, MSH’s oncology department focuses on providing patients with world class care, close to home.

“Shakir, the inspirational gift we are celebrating today speaks loudly to the trust you have bestowed on us to deliver the highest quality care to our patients,

their families and the community,” said Jo-anne Marr, President & CEO, MSH. “We will strive to proactively think, act and innovate every day to provide our patients with care that is connected to the community in which they live.”

Rehmatullah often gives anonymously and has asked MSH to hold the amount of his gift in confidence.

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation exists to enable the growth of Markham Stouffville Hospital by raising funds and awareness for its ongoing priorities and needs. Donations from the community fund lifesaving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class healthcare at MSH.

## The Shakir Rehmatullah Cancer Clinic Naming Celebration – October 30



(L-R) Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation, Jo-anne Marr, CEO MSH, Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Mr. Shakir Rehmatullah, President & Founder of Flato Developments Inc. with children Ayana, Usman, and Eshal, Ontario Premier Doug Ford, Samir Dossal, President, Canada Pakistan Business Council, Khalid Usman, Ward 7 Councillor, City of Markham



Officially unveiling The Shakir Rehmatullah Cancer Clinic at Markham Stouffville Hospital



Usman, Eshal, and Ayana stand with their father Shakir Rehmatullah, President & Founder of Flato Developments Inc., Ontario Premier Doug Ford, and Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti



Shakir Rehmatullah President & Founder of Flato Developments Inc. with children Usman, Ayana and Eshal.



Samir Dossal, President, Canada Pakistan Business Council



- The Honourable Kaleed Rasheed, MPP, Mississauga East – Cooksville

Shakir Rehmatullah President & Founder of Flato Developments Inc. in front of newly unveiled interior signage naming Markham Stouffville Hospital’s cancer clinic



Ontario Premier Doug Ford shakes hands with Shakir Rehmatullah President & Founder of Flato Developments Inc.



Usman, Eshal, and Ayana stand with their father Shakir Rehmatullah and Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti



# South Asian Philanthropic Council, Royal Bank and SACHA jointly raise \$23,350

By Siva Sivapragasam

**South Asian Philanthropic Council, Royal Bank and SACHA jointly raise \$23,350 through their inaugural walkathon to support the Bridletowne Health and Wellness Centre for Scarborough and Rouge Hospital.**

Patients with kidney failure will be happy to know that the South Asian

Philanthropic Council, Royal Bank and SACHA have jointly raised \$23,350 through a Walkathon for the Scarborough and Rouge Hospital Foundation to purchase a new dialysis machine for the Bridletowne Health and Wellness Centre. The Walkathon which was held on Sunday October 21st began from the Malvern Town Centre towards the Scarborough and Rouge Hospital, Centenary site and had a substantial at-

tendance on a Sunday morning despite the cold weather where more than fifty Royal Bank employees together with members of the community and community leaders participated.

The cheque for the amount raised through the Walkathon was presented to Mr. Michael Mazza, President & CEO of the Scarborough and Rouge Hospital Foundation By Ganesan Sugumar, Roshni Mukerjee, Ajith Sabarat-

nam, Kula Sellathurai (SACHA) and the RBC team.

The two leaders who took an active role for the Walkathon fundraiser were Mohan Sundaramohan – RBC Royal Bank’s Morningside/Milner Branch Manager and Kula Sellathurai - Newtown Centre and Inter-Citi Logistics CEO.

*(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)*



## RBC Royal Bank Morningside / Milner Branch

RBC Royal Bank Morningside & Milner Branch has successfully completed 11 years of committed service to the Scarborough/Rouge community! The staff at the Morningside & Milner Branch would like to extend their thanks to the Personal and Business clients for their continued support!

**Mohan Sundaramohan** Branch Manager  
865 Milner Avenue, Scarborough, ON. M1B 5N6  
Tel: 416 284 3694 | Fax: 416 284 2246

### Branch Hours

Mon: 9:30 - 5:00  
Tue: 9:30 - 5:00  
Wed: 9:30 - 8:00  
Thu: 9:30 - 8:00  
Fri: 9:30 - 6:00  
Sat: 9:00 - 4:00  
Sun: closed







# How to Take Control of your Health: New Resources to Improve Your Health Literacy

Everyday we're bombarded with different studies warning of us of health risks or benefits of foods and products in our everyday lives. One day dark chocolate will help us live longer, one day we should avoid it at all costs. Given the magnitude of information we receive and the complexities of our healthcare system, it's not surprising that over half of Canadians are not health literate.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, 60 per cent of Canadian adults and 88 per cent of seniors are not health literate.

## What is health literacy?

Good health literacy means you are able to access, understand, evaluate, communicate and use information related to your health and make appropriate, lifestyle decisions. Low health literacy is associated with poor health outcomes.

ABC Health Matters was created in 2016 as a way of empowering Canadians to manage their health more effectively and to increase their confidence in discussing health issues with family, friends and health care providers.

The Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood and community Health Centre

(DPNCHC) is one of the many neighbourhoods throughout Ontario that's delivered the ABC Health Matters workshop. The community centre has delivered the workshop to DPNCHC members who are predominantly new to Canada, as well as new parents, all with varying levels of health literacy. Gabrielle Langlois, Community Development and Health Promoter for DPNCHC, explained, "Our clients may not be able to articulate their symptoms clearly but teaching them to include the impact of how they are feeling is a huge step towards more effective communication with their doctor." Langlois went on to lament the fact that many people have difficulty retaining the information provided to them by their doctors, pharmacists and other health care providers. She commented on the urgent need for a template to write down important information such as diagnosis and the name of prescribed medications and how to take them.

"It would be hard to find something more personal to someone than their health," said ABC Life Literacy Canada Executive Director Mack Rogers. "It can be frustrating and sometimes frightening to feel as if you don't have



control over your own health which is why we created the ABC Health Matters program.

This past September, ABC Health Matters launched nine new resources including a pocket-sized guide for patient when speaking to health care pro-

fessionals, a medical history card, tips for your doctor visit and much more. ABC Health Matters is supported by AbbVie Corporation.

To view and access these resources, visit [www.ABCHealthMatters.ca](http://www.ABCHealthMatters.ca).

## Jessica Holmes to bring comedic performance to Markham Stouffville Hospital fundraiser

Markham, ON (November 6, 2018) On November 11, community members, those touched by cancer and their loved ones, dignitaries and high-profile celebrities, will join together at the 29th CIBC Celebration of Hope, all in support of the newly named cancer clinic at Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH); The Shakir Rehmatullah Cancer Clinic honours the generous seven-figure donation of Mr. Rehmatullah to MSH.

New this year to the event is Canadian comedian, author and actress Jessica Holmes – who has opened for Jerry Seinfeld, Ellen DeGeneres and Oprah Winfrey – she will perform an interactive mix of stand-up comedy and absolutely hysterical impressions. Canadian radio icon Erin Davis will take the stage as emcee – her 25th time at the helm.

With the festive season fast approaching, guests will enjoy an elegant afternoon filled with on-site boutique shopping, amazing auction prizes and inspiring speeches, all under the theme, "Even Santa Loves Pink." The event will conclude with the highly anticipated Raffle of Hope – drawing the winner of a brand new 2019 Jetta, generously donated by Town+Country Volkswagen.

Hosted on Remembrance Day, the luncheon will honour angels lost to cancer including past Hope Award recipient Deborah Cooper, beloved wife of long-time radio personality Mike Cooper of 98.1 CHFI. Over 800 guests will take part in the event

that has CIBC returning for a seventh year as Title Sponsor and Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites marks its 16th year as Venue Sponsor. For further details visit [celebrationofhope.info](http://celebrationofhope.info).

**WHEN: Sunday, November 11, 2018**

**9:00 a.m. Shopping begins**

**12:30 p.m. Lunch and event agenda begins with Remembrance Day tribute led by Erin Davis**

**2:20 p.m. Jessica Holmes comedic performance**

**3:00 p.m. Raffle of Hope draw: 2019 Jetta winner announced**

**3:15 p.m. Exclusive book signing with Jessica Holmes**

**WHERE: Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites Conference Centre & Spa**

**8500 Warden Ave, Markham, ON**

**WHO: The Honourable Jane Philpott, Member of Parliament for Markham-Stouffville**

**Jessica Holmes, comedian, actress, author**

**Erin Davis, Canadian radio icon and event emcee**

**Dr. Leena Hajra, Dr. Crystal Pallister, Dr. Mateya Trinkaus of MSH Oncology Team**

**Tanya Porter, grateful cancer patient**

**Shakir Rehmatullah, generous donor**

**Jo-anne Marr, President & CEO, MSH**

**Suzette Strong, CEO, MSHF**



Jessica Holmes

Allan Bell, VP, Community Relations & Corporate Partnerships & Events, MSHF and co-emcee

Julia Suppa, Producer/Host

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation exists to enable the growth of Markham Stouffville Hospital by raising funds and awareness for its ongoing priorities and needs. Donations from the community fund life-saving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class healthcare at MSH.





Health & Care



Scarborough and Rouge Hospital



Rouge Valley HEALTH SYSTEM

## SAVE THE DATE - WE BECOME SCARBOROUGH HEALTH NETWORK ON NOVEMBER 22!

We've been on quite a unique journey since our sites came together in 2016 under our interim name, Scarborough and Rouge Hospital – a journey to create our first strategic plan, find our permanent name and look, and plan for our facilities of the future.

On November 22, we will officially begin using our new hospital name: Scarborough Health Network (SHN). This proposed name was introduced at our Annual General Meeting in June, and approved by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care over the summer.

It was the ideas and insights of our staff, physi-

cians, volunteers, patients, and community that set the course for this transformation. Through an extensive engagement process, we have produced a bold new roadmap to guide us through 2023, as well as a new identity that truly reflects the heart of who we are, who we serve, and who we represent.

Stay tuned for many exciting changes, including a new hospital logo, website, and signage.

Join us as we celebrate our official transition to SHN on November 22. Watch [srh-hospital.ca](http://srh-hospital.ca) for event details.

Together, we're going to shape the future of care.



## Scarborough and Rouge Hospital to celebrate World Preemie Day with families of children cared for in NICUs

Parents of children cared for in Scarborough and Rouge Hospital's (SRH) three neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) are invited to join staff and physicians at a special event to celebrate World Preemie Day on Sunday, November 18.

The event will provide families, who in some cases spent weeks together in the NICUs, the opportunity to share experiences, see how well each other's children are thriving, and reconnect with hospital staff and physicians. Families will be treated to refreshments, various games and activities, as well as prizes and giveaways.

### Event details

**When:**

Sunday, November 18, 2018, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

**Where:**

Scarborough and Rouge Hospital Centenary site, 2867 Ellesmere Road 3rd floor cafeteria area



World Prematurity Day is a globally-renowned educational event that raises awareness about premature births, while also enhancing and celebrating the lives of "preemies" and

their families. Approximately one in 10 babies are born preterm each year worldwide.

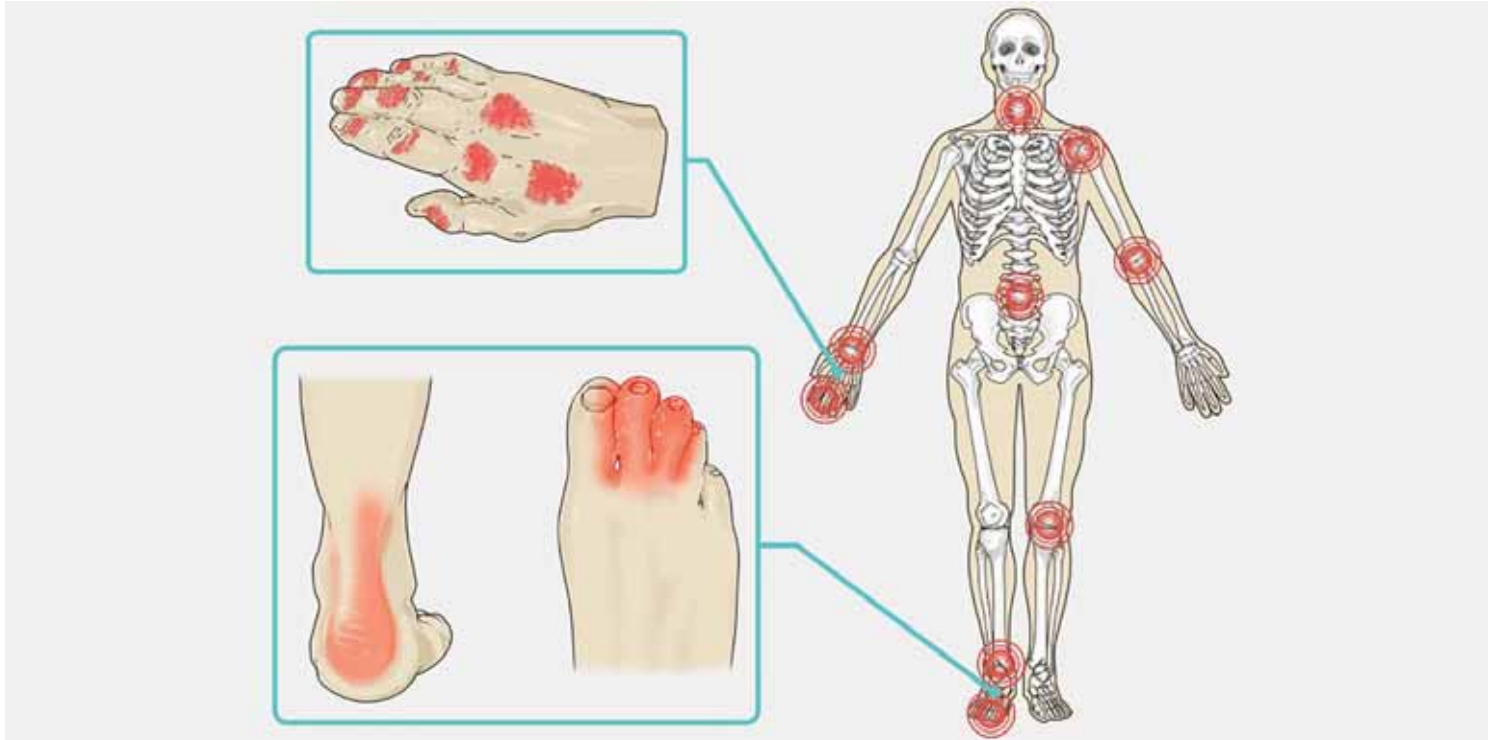
SRH has the fourth largest maternal newborn program in Ontario with

approximately 6,500 babies born in the hospital's three birthing units each year and nearly 2,000 babies cared for each year in the hospital's three NICUs annually.





# Rheumatologist Dr. Thanu Ruban supports health promoters to increase awareness on Psoriatic Arthritis



The Canadian Skin Patient Alliance and the Canadian Spondylitis Association hosted a Twitter Chat, supported by AbbVie Canada, about PsA on Thursday, October 18th.

Questions and answers were shared on inflammatory disease about PsA, how it affects those who live with it, what kinds of support services and resources are available, and disease management strategies.

Health Canada granted October 19 as National Psoriatic Arthritis Day. This was a timely opportunity to define and increase awareness of the impact on, and resources available to, Canadians living with this chronic disease.



**Dr. Thanu Ruban**

People living with Psoriatic arthritis (PsA) have felt isolated and not as

supported as others living with inflammatory arthritis. Why? Because it is a lesser known form of inflammatory arthritis, one that can arise in people who have psoriasis. It's painful, debilitating, and chronic.

Dr. Thanu Ruban is a rheumatologist with a special interest in inflammatory arthritis and osteoporosis. She has a full time private practice, located in the Boxgrove Medical Centre.

In addition to providing hospital rheumatology call coverage, she provides expertise in the Osteoporosis Clinic at Markham-Stouffville Hospital. She completed her medical school at McMaster University in 2008. Af-

ter finishing her internal medicine residency at McMaster University, she went on to complete her rheumatology fellowship at the University of Toronto in 2014. Outside of clinical practice, she is involved with teaching and advocacy work.

She takes on medical students, residents and rheumatology fellows for medical electives in Rheumatology as a lecturer with the University of Toronto. She is an active board member of the Ontario Rheumatology Association, working to improve access to quality rheumatology care in Ontario.

# Renowned fundraiser Alayne Metrick returning to her roots at SRH Foundation

She's a Fellow of the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy and has been singled out for her extraordinary contribution to the fundraising community. And now, Alayne Metrick is returning to where she started her illustrious fundraising career in a new position with Scarborough and Rouge Hospital Foundation (SRH Foundation).

"It's truly an honour to have such an esteemed member of the fundraising community on our team," said Michael Mazza, President and CEO of SRH Foundation.

Alayne lives in Scarborough and began her career at Centenary Hospital Foundation where she previously served as President.



**Alayne Metrick**

Between 1995 and 2017, she served as President of St. Michael's Foundation at St. Michael's Hospital, and has been Executive Director of their Foundation for the last year. During her tenure at St. Mike's, she spearheaded four successful fundraising campaigns, in-



cluding a recent \$238 million campaign to advance patient care and research, and increased the hospital's fundraising revenues from \$5.5 million to \$53.5 million annually.

In addition to being a Fellow of the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy, Alayne is also a recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee award.

In her new role as Special Advisor at SRH Foundation, Alayne will work directly with the campaign volunteers and donors to raise funds for the It's Our Time campaign.

"I'm looking forward to returning to my roots in the community that I call home and being a part of the exciting journey at SRH to shape the future of care in Scarborough," said Alayne.





Special Feature

# Four Canadian Tamils elected as School Board Trustees in Ontario

## Election Analysis

### Raymond Rajabalan

Out of a total of 29 Tamil candidates who contested on October 22nd in six different municipalities in the province of Ontario for a number of positions including City councillor, Regional councillor and School Board trustees, four have been elected as School Board trustees. Two of them have been re-elected while the other two have been elected for the very first time.

While we all welcome their remarkable success, the fact remains, we need more of them to serve the ever increasing Tamil population in Ontario.

While Juanita Nathan was re-elected in York region Parhti Kandavel got re-elected in Toronto. Yalini Rajakulasingam and Anu Sriskandarajah have been elected as School board trustees in Toronto for the first time.

### Lost Opportunities

It is unfortunate that Toronto councillor Neethan Shan lost his seat by just 154 votes. One of the reason for his loss was the reduction of the total number of Toronto councillors from 47 to 25 by Premier Doug Ford. Neethan was elected councillor just last year during a bye election and did not have much time to prove himself.

Another opportunity for a Tamil candidate being elected as a councillor in the city of Markham was lost due to vote splitting among five Tamil candidates who contested in Ward 7. Though there is no rule to prevent more than one Tamil candidate contesting in any particular ward or electorate it will benefit every candidate if they can examine themselves as to their possibility of being elected. Any one contesting for any position in this great country should do their homework and connect themselves with various communities well in advance and become familiar with their needs. There are people from every country in the world living in Canada and it is very important to mix freely with all of them and gain a wide spread support. After all every candidate is aware that once elected they will have to serve all the communities within their area.

### Election results at a glance

The details of how the successful Tamil candidates fared in the recent election are provided below;



Yalini Rajakulasingam



Parthi Kandavel



Anu Sriskandaraja



Juanita Nathan

## TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE ELECTION RESULTS

- WARD 21  
Yalini Rajakulasingam 5014 (31.48%)  
Roy Hu 4738 (29.74%)  
Kulasegarampillai Ganesh 617 (3.87%)

- WARD 18  
Parthi Kandavel 5053 (22.37%)  
Christina Blizzard 4560 (20.47 %)

- WARD 22  
Anu Sriskandaraja 7147 (36.27 %)  
Roxanne Wright 3044 (14.25 %)  
Akila Rudrasinghsm 2145 (10.04 %)  
Vijaypalan Tharsingan 998 (4.67%)

## YORK REGION SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE ELECTION

- WARDS 7 & 8  
Juanita Nathan 6747  
Jerry Chan 5742

## MARKHAM MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR ELECTION

- WARD 7  
Usman Khalid 3308  
Kethiga Logan Kanapathypillai 2635  
Killii Chelliah 1961  
Malar Varatharaja 1587  
Sothy Sella 481  
Elagupillai Srithran 231

The need for more political leaders to serve the Tamil community

Though we already have one Federal Member of Parliament, two provincial members of parliament and four school board trustees, yet we need more of them to represent and serve the needs of over 400,000 Tamils living in Ontario. It is nearly 35 years since Tamils first began to arrive in Canada and we really need many to represent us at various levels of government,

When one reviews the overall results one can clearly note why many of our candidates were not successful. Planning well ahead of the next election, making their presence felt in the regions where they intend to seek election, taking genuine interests of the needs of various communities are some of the factors that may lead to success of many more Tamil candidates in future elections.

## Canadian Tamil Congress congratulates elected municipal government representatives

The Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) has congratulated all candidates elected in the municipal elections held on October 22nd 2018. Four Tamil Canadians have been elected in this municipal elections, namely Juanita Nathan, York District School Board Trustee, Toronto District School Board Trustees Parthi Kandavel, Dr. Anu Sriskandarajah and Yalini Raja-

kulasingam.

"We are excited to see four young Tamil Canadians elected in this municipal elections" said Dr. Vadivelu Santhakumar, President of CTC. "We look forward to working alongside all



Canadian Tamil Congress  
கனடியத் தமிழர் பேரவை  
Congrès Tamoul Canadien  
"Voice of Tamil Canadians"

the newly elected municipal government representatives on the many issues facing the Tamil community."





# Joe Li Re-Elected Regional Councillor

Joe Li was elected to Markham and York Region Council in 2010 & 2014. He is the first Hakka Chinese from India to hold public office in the City of Markham, Municipality of York Region, and Canada.

Joe is a Chartered Financial Consultant and Chartered Life Underwriter by profession. As Markham Regional Councillor he chairs York Region Economic Development and Planning, Markham Transportation Committee, and Director-Toronto Global Invest and Power Stream.

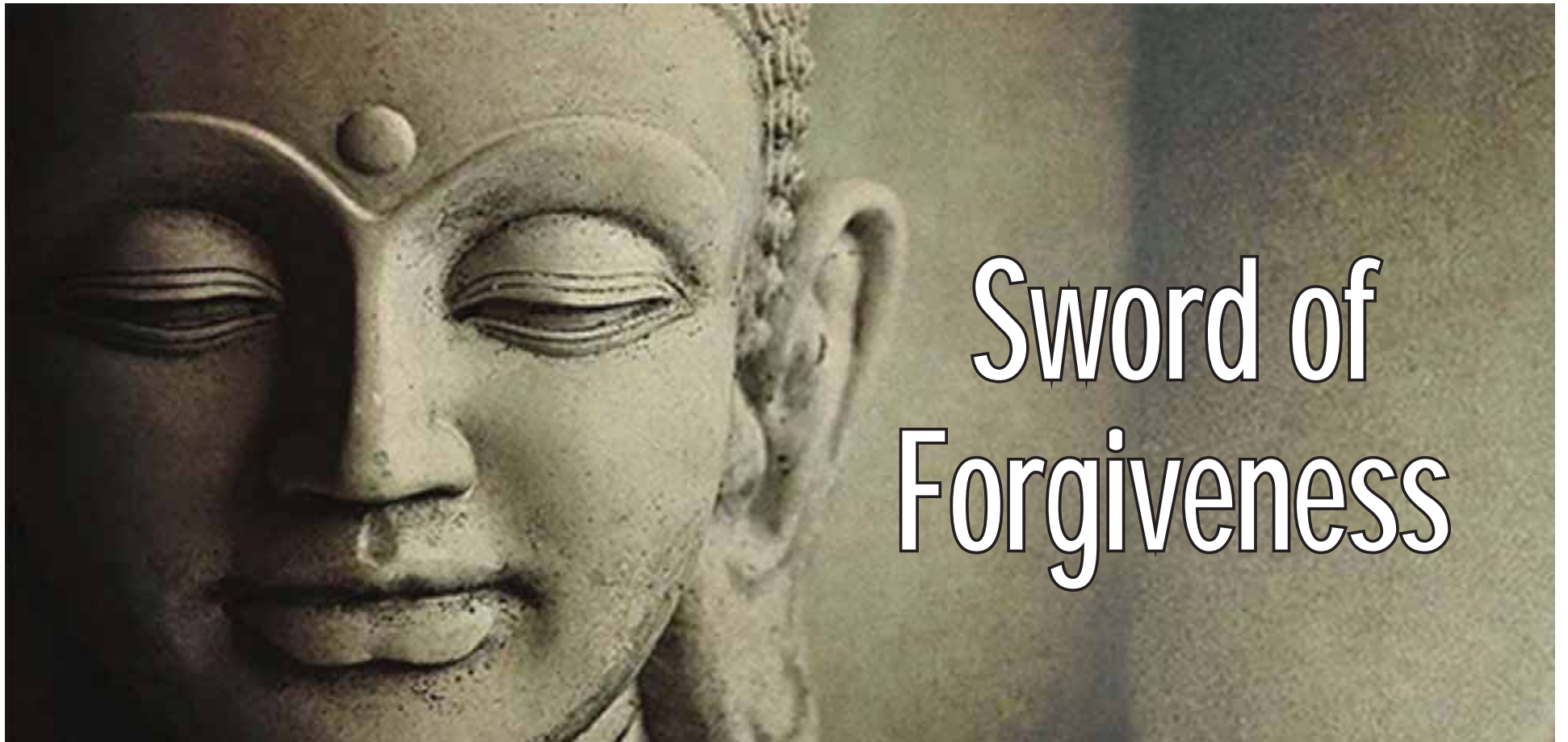
He is actively involved in diverse cultural events, charitable organizations, trade missions, and notably in the promotion of business development opportunities to build a stronger and more prosperous Markham. He speaks English, Swedish, Hakka, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hindi and Urdu. Joe and his wife Yvonne have three children, Francis, Melvin and Phyllis. Congratulations and best wishes to Regional Councillor Joe Li in his future endeavours.







## WORDS OF PEACE



## Sword of Forgiveness

## Forgiveness is to sever the relationship with an action that is dragging you down

Forgiveness does not equate acceptance; some things are unacceptable. But forgiveness is a powerful thing. It has the ability to bring you freedom. An excerpt from Prem speaking in Cape Town, South Africa (“Unlocking Hope”)

**MC:**

One of the questions that was posed is, “If forgiveness is difficult for you to begin with—forgiving someone else is hard enough—turning it inward to the person that you know better than anyone else, the person that you probably judge more than anyone else—how do you forgive yourself?”

**Prem Rawat:**

Well, that’s a wonderful question. Because that is so important, to be able to forgive yourself. And let’s just not even bring “you and somebody else” into the picture. Let’s just talk about forgiveness, what “forgiveness” is.

And a lot of people think “Forgiveness is granting license to mediocrity, granting license to somebody’s mistake.” That is not forgiveness. “Forgiveness” is to sever the relationship with that action that is dragging you down.

So, now, whatever—and, you know, somebody did something to you that was terrible. And that happened a long time ago. But, that person still has a clutch on you. They still have a clutch on you. Because every day that you wake up, perhaps,

and in a solitary moment, you curse that person; you think of that person; that person is still connected to you.

And forgiveness is saying, “No more. You will not have control over me. I want my life back. I want my life back, and I do not authorize you, any more, to haunt me.” That’s what forgiveness is.

So, it’s not going around saying, “Oh, yeah, I, I, I know you, you....” I mean, uh! And this is the way I see it. This is the way I see it. I mean, one time a horrible thing happened to me. And then, every time I would think about it, it was like, “Oh, my God, oh, my God, oh, my God.”

And then I just said, “You know, that little punk still has control over me. And I’m not even in his country anymore. And I’m not going to let him have control over me.” And I said, “That’s it. Gone!”

That’s what forgiveness is. Forgiveness is very powerful. It’s really saying, “No, I’ve got my life. Thank you very much.”

Regaining—it’s regaining. Because, if you don’t, then the clutches will still be there. And what it does to you—what this clutching does to you, these claws that are buried inside of you, to infuriate you—it causes anger; it causes fear; it causes you to shut down; it causes you to stop moving forward; it stops appreciation.

And you live in fear. You live in fear! And that person is gone, but the clutches are still there. And it’s say-

ing, “No more, thank you!”

And when you start to look at forgiveness that way, it takes on a whole different meaning. Because, up till now it’s been, it’s like, “Oh, uh, I, I forgive you, and you know, it’s okay. Eh, and you did this to me, and it’s like....”

But you know, there are things that can happen to you in this life that, if you are talking about acceptance of somebody’s actions, it’s not going to happen. It’s just not going to happen! Because you cannot accept some of those actions. They are so heinous!

And you cannot allow yourself to be a victim. Some of the things, you will never be able to say, “Oh, yeah, I’m fine with that.” But! It’s up to you whether you allow the talons of that person and that activity still to be gripping you. Because if you don’t, then use the sword of forgiveness and free yourself. You move on.

So that’s how I see forgiveness. Not saying, “Oh, yeah, okay, you did this.” Because, some of the actions are so heinous! And you see that. You see that happening, so many places.

Another way to understand this is, one day Buddha was out walking, and all these people were saying very bad things about him. So his disciple who was with him came back, and he said, “Buddha, all those people were doing terrible things, saying terrible things to you. Aren’t you affected by that?”

And Buddha said, “Okay, well, see this bowl? Whose bowl is it?” It was Buddha’s bowl. And he said, “Yeah, it’s your bowl!” So then he took the bowl and he scooted it towards his disciple a little bit. He says, “Whose bowl is it now?” The disciple said, “It’s still your bowl.” He scooted it a little closer. “And whose bowl is it now?” Scooted it in a little closer. “Whose bowl is it now?”

He kept going like that, and then finally he took the bowl and put it in his disciple’s lap. He said, “Whose bowl is it now?” He says, “Buddha, it’s still your bowl.” He said, “Exactly. Exactly! I don’t have to accept this. The day I do, it becomes my bowl. But if I don’t, it’s still theirs.”

You know, and I understand—I mean, sometimes these stories are easier said than actually translated into your life, but at least, if you begin to chisel away....

I mean, maybe the rope is so thick that you won’t be able to cut it in one day. But at least, you start severing it, start understanding the dynamics—that you have the power to sever that rope, that this is what forgiveness means.... That, ultimately one day you will weaken that rope; that it will, it’ll be severed.

But you need to begin. You need to start understanding that.

- Prem Rawat 1 877 707 3221,  
416 431 5000  
www.wopg.org  
www.timelesstoday.com





# John Tory re-elected Mayor of Toronto

By Siva Sivapragasam

The city of Toronto's incumbent Mayor John Tory was re-elected for a second term in a landslide victory in the municipal elections held last month with a 63.49 % of the vote. His main opponent for the position was Jennifer Keesmat who was the Chief City Planner. Tory won all of Toronto's 25 wards in the election.

Four years ago, Tory took only 40 per cent of the popular vote when he defeated Ford who finished in second place with only 33 per cent. Since then, Tory has positioned himself as a steady, experienced leader who could work with all levels of government.

Thanking the voters in his victory speech, Tory stated "We must continue to be a city that is a place of hope for everyone, not a place where people should lose hope."

His opponent Ms. Keesmat congratulated Mr. Tory on his win. "It falls to

all of us to wish him every success", she remarked.

John Tory has been a political activist, radio broadcaster, and a top corporate executive. Tory received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Toronto in 1975 and later the Bachelor of Law Degree in 1978 from Osgoode Law school and was called to the Bar in Ontario in 1980. He was also the President and CEO of Rogers Media which had become one of Canada's largest publishing and broadcasting companies.

Tory has been closely associated with the Canadian Tamil community and had visited Jaffna sometime back to hear and see how the Tamil community was affected by the civil war.

Northern Province Chief Minister Wigneswaran paid a courtesy call on Tory during his visit to Toronto and had discussions on how the city of Toronto can assist the Northern Province on certain issues.



John Tory was elected the 65th Mayor of Toronto on Monday, Oct 22, 2018

# Patrick Brown becomes Mayor of Brampton



Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown stands on stage with his wife Genevieve Gaultieri after winning the Brampton Mayoral Election during a campaign celebration in Brampton, Ont. on Monday, October 22, 2018. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Chris Young

By Siva Sivapragasam

Patrick Brown, former Ontario Progressive Conservative leader has made a political comeback by becoming the Mayor of Brampton in the recently held municipal elections defeating incumbent Mayor Linda Jeffrey.

"My party is the people of Brampton and I want results," Brown said in a victory speech that made no reference to his previous troubles. "Brampton is going to be the envy of Ontario and Brampton is going to become an economic engine," he remarked.

Mr. Brown entered the Brampton mayoral race at the last minute, after Mr. Ford abruptly announced he was cancelling several races for regional chairs and returning to the old appointment system. In 2015, Brown was elected leader of the Ontario Provincial

Progressive Party defeating his only remaining opponent, Christine Elliott, winning with 61.8% of the membership vote.

Patrick Brown graduated from St. Michael's College School, a private Catholic school in Toronto. He studied political science at the University of Toronto and graduated with a law degree from the University of Windsor. During his second year at law school, he was one of 10 recipients of the As Prime Minister Award. He worked for Magna International in their legal department for four years. Brown is also writing a book about his experience which is expected to be published soon.

Mr. Patrick Brown has also been closely associated with the Canadian Tamil community and has engaged himself in several activities and events hosted by the Tamil community.

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**Information Session**  
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 1 The Esplanade South, Pickering

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Special Feature

# Canadian Prime Minister joins in Diwali Celebrations in Toronto

Town of Richmond Hill was honoured with a visit by The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau attending the Diwali Celebrations with everyone at the Vishnu Mandir Temple on Tuesday, Nov 6, 2018. Several Members of Parliament including Gary Anandasangaree, Majid Jowhari, Raj Siani, Mayors John Tory, Dave Barrow and Patrick Brown, Police Chiefs and distinguished guests attended to welcome our Prime Minister!





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# Scarborough-Rouge Park MP Gary Anandasangaree begins Campaign

Following a very successful first fundraising event on Friday, Nov 2, 2018 at Scarborough Convention Centre, Scarborough-Rouge Park MP Gary Anandasangaree delivered a special message to everyone via social media as below:

I would like to thank my family, friends and members of the Scarborough- Rouge Park community for your encouragement Friday evening as I took my first steps towards 2019.

Your support is essential if we are to continue living in a country where positive and progressive policies triumph over the politics of fear and division.

I look forward to continuing this journey with all of you, and will remain steadfast in my commitment to serve our community and our country.

Onward to 2019!







# TRIBUTE TO LATE MR. KANTHAR SIVANATHAN

## (The acclaimed multifaceted personality)

C. Kamalaharan

The tragic news of the sudden demise of the illustrious personality Mr. Kanthar Sivanathan sent shock waves all over. Being one of his former students at Palaly Teachers' College I remained thunderstruck on hearing the heart-wrenching news. Way back more than fifty years ago memories of my association with him begin to unfurl as I sit to pen this article with both eyes moist. I was the editor of the science journal 'Sudhar' published by the Science, Mathematics and Handicraft Association for which Mr. Sivanathan was the vice-patron. On the cover of the journal was the photo of the planetarium the first of its kind in the country with a write up inside. Being highly impressed by the layout Mr. Sivanathan sent a request to me to prepare a scientific article with a photo for the cover and a write up for publication by the next batch of teacher trainees. Accordingly I sent an informative article on photomicrography with a picture of a camera and a microscope coupled together by the micro-adapter for the cover and a write up. During the frequent contacts I had with him regarding the publication and other issues I admired the way he put forth useful suggestions and innovations. A perfect gentleman was he, outspoken and frank, never minced his words and always called a spade a spade. He was a lecturer par excellence and his methodology in teaching inspired all his students who have served exceptionally well as competent teachers throughout the country. I remember him mentioning that the Palaly Trained Teachers are the ones who are handling the G.C.E O/L classes successfully.

He was always delighted to meet his past students. When my wife and I (both his former students during different periods) visited him a few years back at his residence in Mississauga, he received us warmly and was happy to meet us as graduates, my wife as a maths graduate and me as an English graduate. It was the most memorable moment when we sat reminiscing the days we spent at the Palaly Teachers' College and discussed various issues.

Mr. Sivanathan had his secondary education at Hartley College Point Pedro one of the premier educational institutions in the North. As an assiduous student he passed the BSc (Hons) degree at the University of Colombo and successfully followed the diploma in education at the University of Peradeniya at a young age. He was duly appointed as Tutor/Demonstrator in Chemistry at the University of Colombo and also as a visiting lecturer at the Aquanas University Colombo. Following these assignments he was inducted as a teacher at Hartley College his alma mater, Ratmalana Hindu College and at Vigneswara College Karaveddy. Later he served as senior lecturer for a long period at Palaly Teachers' College. During his tenure there he won a scholarship to Oregon State University U.S.A where he obtained his Masters' degree in Mathematics.

Since then it was a phenomenal rise to fame for Mr. Sivanathan as he took up responsibilities one after the other in the Education Administrative Service. He was appointed as Chief Education Officer at Mannar and Kalmunai districts, Director of Education Jaffna District, Range Director Tamil Unit 8

Regions and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Jaffna.

Mr. Sivanathan retired prematurely and took up assignment as Teacher/ Sectional Head in Transkei, South Africa. While serving there he went to Coimbatore, India and organised the Simmaya High School and served there as principal. He finally retired from active service as an educational advisor and an energetic contributor for the overall development of education in his motherland and abroad.

During his sunset years Mr. Sivanathan arrived in Canada and settled in Toronto. But retirement didn't deter him from engaging in activities. He has been an asset to the Peel Tamil Senior Association in Mississauga. While serving there in the Board of Directors he was helpful to the president in publishing the annual magazine Muthuvenil for which he too had contributed informative arti-



Mr. Sivanathan addressing the Seniors at Brampton

cles. Later when he moved to Brampton he continued his services at Brampton Tamil Seniors Association. He served as an advisor and was also responsible for publishing two magazines for which he was the editor besides contributing informative bilingual articles.

Being widely knowledgeable, talented and hell-bent in solving problems he was considered a walking encyclopaedia. He has shared his rich leadership experiences with the seniors, knowledge about nature and how we should adapt to the changes in nature.

Teaching being his forte he had tutored many students in Toronto. He was always fond of being in the midst of his grand kids for whom he taught Mathematics and Science using simple methods and also about many things in life. The grand kids too were happy to be with him. They would say, "Being around grandpa is always an intellectual exercise. He told us to think deeply and defend our ideas."

Mr. Sivanathan was of the view that science wasn't something that is learnt only in a class room, it's a way to understand the world around us and interact

with it. One of his grand daughters had described how she enjoyed the company of her grandpa while going on foot to the public library. During one such strolling when summer was giving way to fall she remarked, "Grandpa, 'It smells like fall.'" To which grandpa replied, "Yes Amma" and posed the question, "Can you tell me why it smells like fall?" "I don't know grandpa." He went on to explain the chemical changes that take place during colour changes and how the leaves decay and fall. "As the leaves decay they release chemical compounds which combine and create the smell."

Mr. Sivanathan was a practical man who did not believe in astrology. Having studied astronomy during his bachelor's degree programme he wrote a book on astrology in which he dealt on predictions. He dispelled the myths in astrology, cautioned the readers that astrology will take them nowhere and suggested that all almanacs should be thrown away. He also mentioned that there are no planets like Ragu and Kethu and that they are nodal points 180 degrees apart.

He once mentioned, "One can't predict what will happen in life as such what one can do is to adapt himself to the changes that happen." He followed this simple philosophy no matter what came and that was the key for his success in life. It was with this attitude he faced the last moments of his life. During ultrasound treatment for an uncomfortable puffy stomach followed by a CT scan it was diagnosed as terminal and that no treatment was available. Later a second opinion was sought from Dr. Gazon. When the doctor entered the room Mr. Sivanathan stood up and shook hands with him. The doctor asked him, "You know what is happening?" Mr. Sivanathan clasped the doctor's hand and said without wavering, "Doctor, I understand that I am diagnosed with liver cancer which is terminal and there is no treatment for it." To which the doctor stood up, held Mr. Sivanathan's hands and said, "I am privileged to meet you, go and have life." Mr. Sivanathan didn't panic neither was he emotional. He said, "I have done everything I need to do with the best of my abilities."

On a Thursday morning after ablu-tions he attended his usual morning prayer and told his wife that he was going to go and lie down. That was his end, he breathed his last peacefully on the auspicious Lord Siva's 'Prathosam' day when the annual festivals of Lord Murugan were in progress at Nallur and at Selvasannathi.

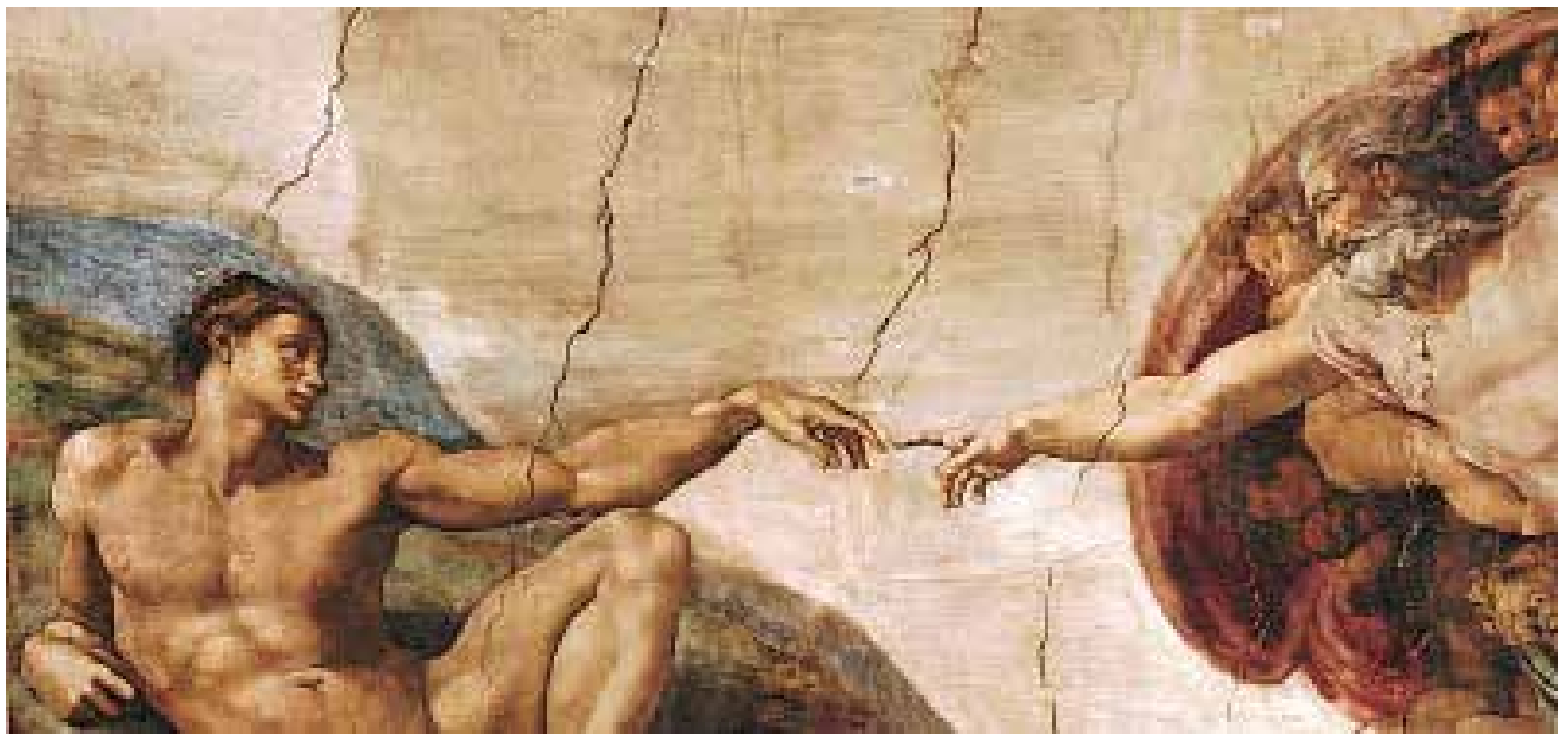
A knowledgeable human being, a successful teacher and an able administrator who was a living example to the world is no more. It was a severe blow for his devoted wife for whom Mr. Sivanathan was a pillar of strength throughout their 60 years of happy married life, for his children he was the mentor who had placed them on a sound footing, for his siblings he was a second father guiding them, for his grandkids he was a source of inspiration and a loving friend, for the seniors he was an energetic, active and knowledgeable companion and for all those who knew him he was a perfect gentleman.

*May his soul rest in peace in Lord Siva's celestial kingdom  
Blessing each one of us.*





# Transitory Nature of Earthly Existence



-Michel Angelo

*JJ Aputharajah*

It is not proper to take the transient things of life as of permanent value. It is base ignorance and even despicable. Great wealth is accumulated like the audience trickling in to witness a show; its disappearance is instantaneous -as it happens after a show. All wealth is fleeting and so when one acquires wealth, it should be promptly spent on works of lasting value. Omar Khayam warns: 'Ah! Make the most of what we may yet spend, before we too into dust descend'. The day shows itself as an entity, but in reality it is

just the relentless movement of the saw, that cuts through life. Long before the tongue fails and the last breath comes up, it is wise to do good deeds, without delay. A wise man, therefore will do good deeds at every opportunity instead of putting it off. The one, who was here yesterday, is no more today and that is a matter of great wonderment, in this world. Thomas Kempis in his devotional book-'The Imitation of Christ' exhorted-'so passes away the glory of the world'. People who are not sure of living the next moment, indulge in day dreams

and make dreams and make millions of plans. Sambandar in his Thiruvagasam wonders-'yararivarsa naarlum varl naarlum'. The nexus between soul and body is as between the fledgeling bird and its erstwhile nest, from which it flies away. Death is like sleep, and birth is the awakening from it. The soul is like a passing guest in the body-without a permanent body of its own. The soul is immortal and the body is subject to decay.

The idea is embodied in this kural.

*“Pukkil aminthinru kollo, udampinul,  
Thucchil iruntha uyirkku’.*



Valluvar's Views





# Christmas

## a worldly celebration originally meant for spiritual resurgence!!!

Jesudason Atputharajah

Christmas was originally meant to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the greatest spiritual revolutionary the world has ever seen. Today Christmas is universally celebrated as day of joy and people of many nations and cultures observe this annual festival. Even the so-called Christians celebrate it for cultural reasons with little or no religious connection. Christmas is associated with a number of ceremonies like decorating an evergreen tree, carol singing of group performers travelling from house to house.

However, the celebration varies from country to country. In Australia, where Christmas occurs in the heat of summer, people commonly celebrate the day with beach outings and barbecues. In the Philippines, snowflakes are a rare sight -but decorations featuring Santa Claus and his reindeer appear in shopping malls nationwide. Christmas has a huge impact on the lives of the people than any other holiday event. A lot of shopping, baking, decorating, ornament hanging and many more. This annual observance touches virtually everyone, and fills countless hearts with anticipation and enthusiasm well in advance. Everything changes. Work stops, vast business empires grind to a halt. Traffic jams vanish. People eat differently and decorate their homes differently. There is feasting of special foods and drinking of special drinks. There are gifts to be opened and X'Mas cards to be posted. Above all there is a whole series of special rituals to be performed-everything from hanging baubles on the Christmas tree to firing Christmas crackers.

Although officially Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, many indulge in it without understanding its spiritual significance. Christmas appeals to everyone irrespective of religious or cultural differences. People who have never entered a church in their adult lives still perform the Christmas ceremonies without question. The name of Father Christmas with the personality of Santa Claus has become immensely popular with modern children. They enjoy all the activities related to Santa Claus including receiving gifts and sweets from him.

We Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto celebrate Christmas in our traditional ways. Past students' unions begin carol services early as in November. They practice singing songs in all seriousness and have well-attended carol services until the very Christmas Day in December. Driberg College, Cha-



vakachcheri; Jaffna College-Uduvil Girls' College; St.John's-Chundikuli Girls' Colleges Past Pupils' organizations are very successful in organizing meaningful carol services. Joel Joseph, an old boy of St. John's organizes excellent carol singing in the name of Eagle Chorus and provides proper exposure to our young singers and musi-

cians. The proceeds of this event are donated to the rehabilitation of refugees in Sri Lanka.

Christmas provides an opportunity for wholesome family time. God created us in families, and made us desire close bonds with others. Even the simple act of eating together strengthens connection between human beings. Jesus

Christ is the saviour of the world. He voluntarily came to earth. He lived and died for the spiritual awakening of human beings. Honouring Him is good, even essential. Celebrating Christmas is essentially celebrating goodness. The spiritual significance of Christmas should not be forgotten in the joys of celebrating it as a festival.

## MOTHERS - MATCHLESS ANGELS

By: Jesudason Atputharajah

Mothers are matchless angels,  
They sacrifice anything and everything,  
For the welfare of their kids  
They are veritable angels on earth,  
They never think of their comforts,  
Wants or longings,  
They need the wellness,  
Of their kids and take,  
Any kind of risks,  
To promote the prospects,  
Of their loved ones,  
A disabled child is never a burden,  
For the mum; they take all the trouble,  
To bring them up,  
As normal human beings  
The word angel mean nothing,  
Compared to the matchless word-mother.





# Navaratri Festival

By: Dr. S. Krishnapillai

Every year, Navaratri festival is celebrated by Hindus all around the world during the month of October. The Saraswathi festival signifies the worshipping of godmother, Parashakti, the supreme power, to fulfill the aspirations and desires of Hindu devotees.

Victory, wealth and education are the three vital tools necessary to achieve a successful life of any human being. Hindu mythology signifies three different divine forms of God to offer these three tools to humans. Although goddess Parashakti is the main God to bless us with these tools, her divine actions are classified under three forms to serve the humans – Goddess of Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati.

Navaratri festival is celebrated for a period of nine consecutive nights during the month of October to worship Parashakti – the Godmother. 'Navam' means 'nine' or 'supreme' and 'Ratri' means 'nights'. Therefore, Navaratri means 'nine supreme nights.' These nine supreme nights are special for Hindu to acquire victory, wealth, and education. During the first three days of the festival, we worship Parashakti in the divine form of 'Durga' to gain her blessings in victory. In the next three days, she is worshipped as Mahalakshmi to acquire her blessings in wealth. The last three days are devoted to Mahasaraswati to win her blessings in education.

Shakti is all powerful (omnipotent) and all present (omnipresent). She has endless powers. Worshipping Shakti in the three different divine forms during these special days ensures her divine presence around us. Her divine act and blessings awaken us, eliminate our ignorance, and tell us the rights and wrongs to be a good person.

Although all the nine days are important for a successful life, the last three nights are particularly important for students due to the process of learning. Learning is an art and the success of learning depends on the students' ability to grasp, understand, and clearly excel at their upcoming examinations. Although learning and understanding a subject depends on the students' abilities, they also need the blessing of an external divine force to achieve their success. The external divine force is something beyond our control, and it is through worshipping the divine force responsible for such tasks that one can attain their blessings easily. It is in this respect that students have to worship the Goddess of education, Saraswati, to obtain her blessings for all of our educational activities. Hindus throughout the world celebrate these nine nights, but they pay special attention to the last three days to evoke the blessings of Saraswati for the purpose of a successful education of their children. If children can have a successful education career, the rest of their life would also be successful. This is because educational status determines the life of a person for anything, including wealth.

Education is the main tool that determines the future of a student. With high educational qualifications, a student can achieve a higher status with respect to his/her job. Naturally, such students would be financially well off because the income he/she gets is directly related to his/



her education qualifications. Thus, worshipping Saraswati, the goddess of education, is the only way for students to achieve their aspirations for the future. Believing in the power of God itself is more than enough to fulfill your aspirations. As a true devotee to the goddess of education, you are sure to achieve her blessings fully.

Devotees who have succeeded in getting her blessings vouch that Shakti is always within their hearts. She directs them and looks after all their activities because she is the supreme controller of both material and spiritual energies.


During puja time, we must direct our minds and thoughts towards Parashakti – the Godmother – and at the same time, pronounce the devotional songs of Shakti. These devotional songs will make your thoughts free from environmental disturbances and give you a good opportunity to access Godmother's pure light and love. Those who take part in Navaratri festivals are sure to receive Shakti's blessings on all aspects of health, wealth and education.

It is also a religious practise to display dolls and figures called 'Golu' during the period of Navaratri. These displays are typically thematic, narrating a legend from a Hindu belief. These Golu dolls are typically made of rural artisans from clay and local materials, then brightly painted. These dolls are generally arranged in an odd number of tiers to tell a story related to Hindu religion.

RG Education Centers celebrated its annual Navaratri festival on October 18, 2018 in the presence of its staff, the students of RG Education Centers, and their parents. The religious celebration started at 5:30pm with priest, Gowtham Karukkal, conducting the Puja. The priest evoked blessings for the students in the endeavour for their success in educational career and worshipped all mighty Saraswati, the goddess of education and learning, to bless them with her divine powers for their accomplishments.

RG Education Center is committed to conducting this important festival every year and to making its students understand the value of such festivals for their education. Although the education center has a team of well-experienced and dedicated teachers to educate students, it also strongly believes in the divine powers of the God of education, Saraswati, as the supreme power that can deliver true success to our students.






## RG Education Centers

Giving the Gift of Education

### Giving the Gift of Education



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

Other courses include:

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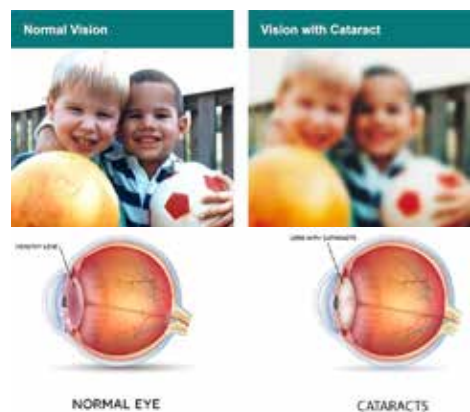
# VISION LOSS IS A SIGNIFICANT LOSS

## Common Eye Diseases Among Elders and Cure

By: *Uthayan Thurairajah*

We feel a limited vision when we grow older. Also, our risk for vision problems that can affect our lifestyle and independence increases. Vision loss among the elderly is a significant healthcare problem. The most common causes of vision loss among the elderly are age-related macular degeneration (AMD), glaucoma, cataract, and diabetic retinopathy. The vision changes as we age and the most common eye diseases are explained in this article to assist what to look for and what to do if you develop a vision problem and provides prevention tips to help you avoid loss of vision.

### CATARACTS:



The clear lens of the eye consists of protein and water arranged in a precise pattern. The proteins clump together, causing the lens to cloud and turn yellow when we age. It is a natural process which occurs in almost everyone. In about half the population, the lens eventually gets too cloudy for clear vision.

The apparent signs of a cataract are cloudy or blurry vision—as if you were looking through a dirty windshield. Other symptoms include Colors that seem faded or dull, Increased glare from lamps, sunlight, and headlights, or circles or halos forming around lights at night, Reduced night vision, the Double vision that do not disappear when the other eye is closed and Need for more light for reading or detailed work.

### TREATMENTS/SURGERY:

Cataract surgery improves vision more than 90 percent of the time. The surgeon removes the clouded lens and replaces it with a clear artificial lens. Standard cataract surgery, with a technique called phacoemulsification, uses ultrasound to emulsify the cataract so that it can be removed through a tiny incision. An artificial lens replaces the damaged lens.

Femtosecond laser cataract surgery reduces the amount of ultrasound energy needed by nearly half, which eliminates any loss of healthy cells, and uses smaller incisions. When a lens containing a cataract has grown too dense or hard to treat with ultrasound waves, the doctor will perform an extracapsular cataract extraction. This uses an incision about 3/8 of an inch wide in the cornea, through which the cataract is extracted. The doctor then suctions out the rest of the lens, implants the artificial lens, and closes the incision. The larger incision prolongs healing by several weeks.

### GLAUCOMA

What is glaucoma? It's an eye disease where excess pressure irreparably damages the eye, causing blindness. It is the leading cause of irreversible blindness in the world. In the U.S., an estimated two million people have glaucoma. An equal number of people probably have the disease but do not know it. Because symptoms do not manifest until the disease is very advanced, glaucoma is a sneaky vision thief. Fewer than ten percent of Americans surveyed know that glaucoma has no warning signs, according to the National Eye Institute.



Glaucoma treatments have enhanced with fewer side effects. Doctors can usually control glaucoma once detected it is important to seek treatment right away and be vigilant about taking your medications. Symptoms for angle-closure glaucoma include Sudden blurry vision, Severe eye pain or a headache, Nausea and vomiting, Light sensitivity, and Colored halos forming around lights. Seek medical attention if we have any of these symptoms. Doctors can save your sight with prompt treatment, usually by creating a tiny hole in your iris to relieve pressure. Do not procrastinate, because the damage happens fast, and once vision is lost, it cannot be restored.

### TREATMENTS/SURGERY:

Treatments to lower eye pressure can help control, or delay, vision loss, and blindness even there is no cure for glaucoma. Holding intraocular pressure at a constant, low level might notably decrease the risk of vision loss. Eye drops medications are a typical first line of treatment for glaucoma, and a variety of classes have been developed.

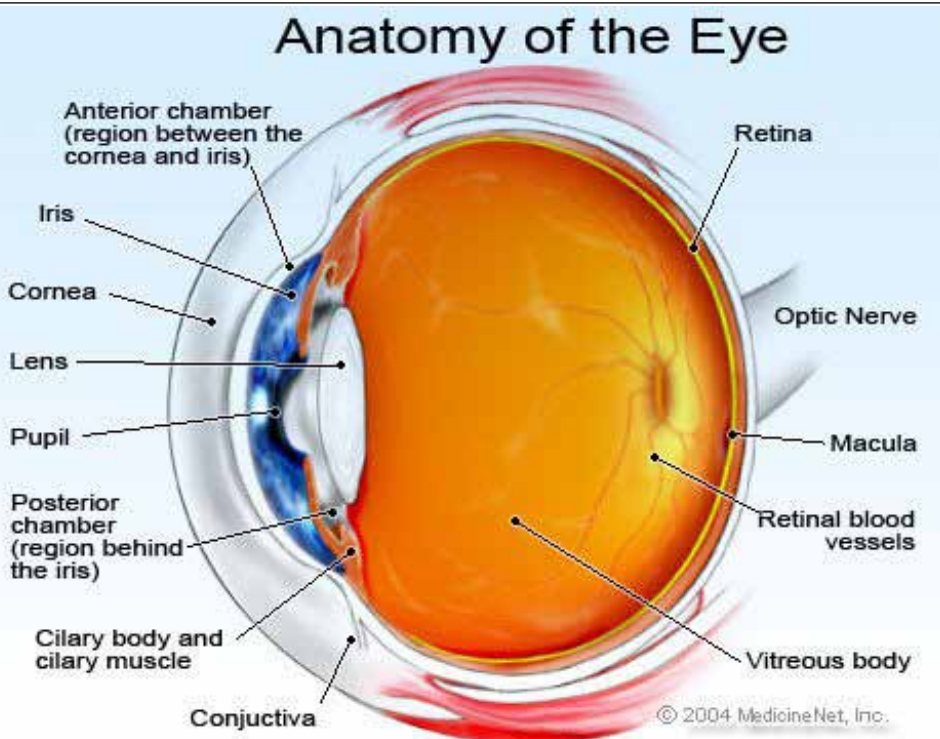
**Here are some medication options:** Prostaglandins promote the drainage of fluid from the eye, and they have the convenience of once-daily dosing. Prostaglandins improve the flow of liquid from the eye. Side outcomes include itchy or red eyes. Beta-blockers decrease the amount of aqueous humor the eye produces. Potential side effects are limited. Laser surgery may be more powerful than medication for controlling intraocular stress in glaucoma patients with advanced disease. A type of laser surgery (Trabeculoplasty) is done in 10-20 minutes. The high-energy laser to burn holes in the drainage canals to help drainage. This laser targets only selected cells in the eye. Laser surgery is not a stable solution. More than half of patients require conventional surgery because their eye pressure rises within two years after a laser procedure. The laser removes the eye's drainage meshwork to reduce intraocular pressure.

### DIABETIC RETINOPATHY:

A complication of diabetes, diabetic retinopathy afflicts approximately 4.2 million Americans—roughly one-third of people who have diabetes. It is the front cause of new blindness in people between the ages of 20 and 74. Diabetic retinopathy can progress to an advanced stage without any symptoms or pain. If we have any of the following symptoms, we need to see an ophthalmologist immediately: Dark streaks or a red haze that blocks vision, any sense of vision loss or blurred vision, A blind spot in the center, trouble adjusting to changes in light, and Spots or "cobwebs" floating in our vision.

### TREATMENTS/SURGERY:

The most popular treatment is laser surgery called photocoagulation to stop the leakage and growth of new blood vessels. Photocoagulation can reduce vision loss by up to 50 percent. If bleeding into the vitreous body has blocked our vision, we may



need vitrectomy surgery to remove it. This surgery replaces blood-clouded vitreous with saline solution to preserve the shape and pressure of the eye. The same medications used to treat age-related macular degeneration, Lucentis and Avastin, are used to treat diabetic retinopathy.

### AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION:



This condition impairs the central portion of the retina, the source of the sharpest images. It causes a slow decay of central vision required for reading and seeing faces. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) considers for more than half of blindness, and the leading cause of vision loss in Americans over age. As yet there is no remedy for AMD, so seniors must be alert about regular eye exams.

### SYMPTOMS:

Stage 1 of dry AMD has virtually no symptoms. At this stage, it will likely only be discovered through a dilated eye exam where your doctor may note a few small- or medium-sized drusen (yellow, fatty proteins) under your retina.

In the second, intermediate stage, there are many medium-sized drusen or at least one large druse, and patients may notice vision problems such as a blurred spot in the center of their vision, or the need for additional light to read.

At Stage 3, symptoms may become severe. The blurriness in the center of vision grows more massive and darker until reading and seeing faces becomes difficult. At this stage, the retina begins to atrophy. Fortunately, macular degeneration can take many years to compromise vision, and sometimes never progress to Stage 3 at all.

Following are signs of dry macular degeneration: Increasing need for bright light when reading or doing detailed work, blurry vision, mildly distorted vision, and Colors

appear dull. With wet macular degeneration, symptoms may appear suddenly and worsen quickly. Once you have macular degeneration in one eye, you face a higher risk of it developing in the other. You will need regular check-ups to monitor the disease progression.

### TREATMENTS/SURGERY:

For dry AMD, it cannot be reversed once it reaches the advanced stage. Fortunately, early dry AMD is usually slow to progress, and most people live healthy lives with few vision problems for many years. We need to do a regular eye exam to check for growth or development of wet AMD. For wet AMD, drugs are administered by injection into the eye. Another option for wet AMD is photodynamic therapy. A relatively painless outpatient procedure, it uses a combination of a non-thermal laser and a light-sensitizing drug to target the abnormal blood vessels. This treatment was safe in long-term studies.

Laser photocoagulation is another treatment for wet AMD that was once the only option available. It takes only about 30 minutes in an ophthalmologist's office. The National Eye Institute established that taking high-dose supplements of vitamins C and E, beta-carotene, copper, and zinc helped slow disease progression. Vitamin D also might reduce AMD risk, possibly by reducing inflammation and preventing the growth of new blood vessels in the retina. Postmenopausal women with high levels of vitamin D in their blood are much less likely to develop AMD than women with low vitamin D, according to a recent study. There is also evidence that B complex supplements (B6, B12, and folic acid) might help prevent AMD. Women who take these supplements daily may reduce their risk by more than 30 percent.

### SUMMARY:

As per the doctor's recommendation, we cannot prevent our eyes from aging, but we can give them the best possible care. No proven way to prevent AMD. You can reduce your risk factors by changing lifestyle. Early treatment may prevent AMD onset, or hugely slow its progress. Having regular eye exams is critical. If you have diabetes, you can get a dilated eye exam every year. Diabetic retinopathy can be treated if caught early.

Cataracts are a natural consequence of aging. You can, however, reduce your risk. We can wear sunglasses that block 99 percent of UVA and UVB rays when out in the sun. The people with a long history of moderate workout may have a reduced risk of glaucoma, suggesting that strength-training exercise can help reduce eye pressure. Talk to your doctor.

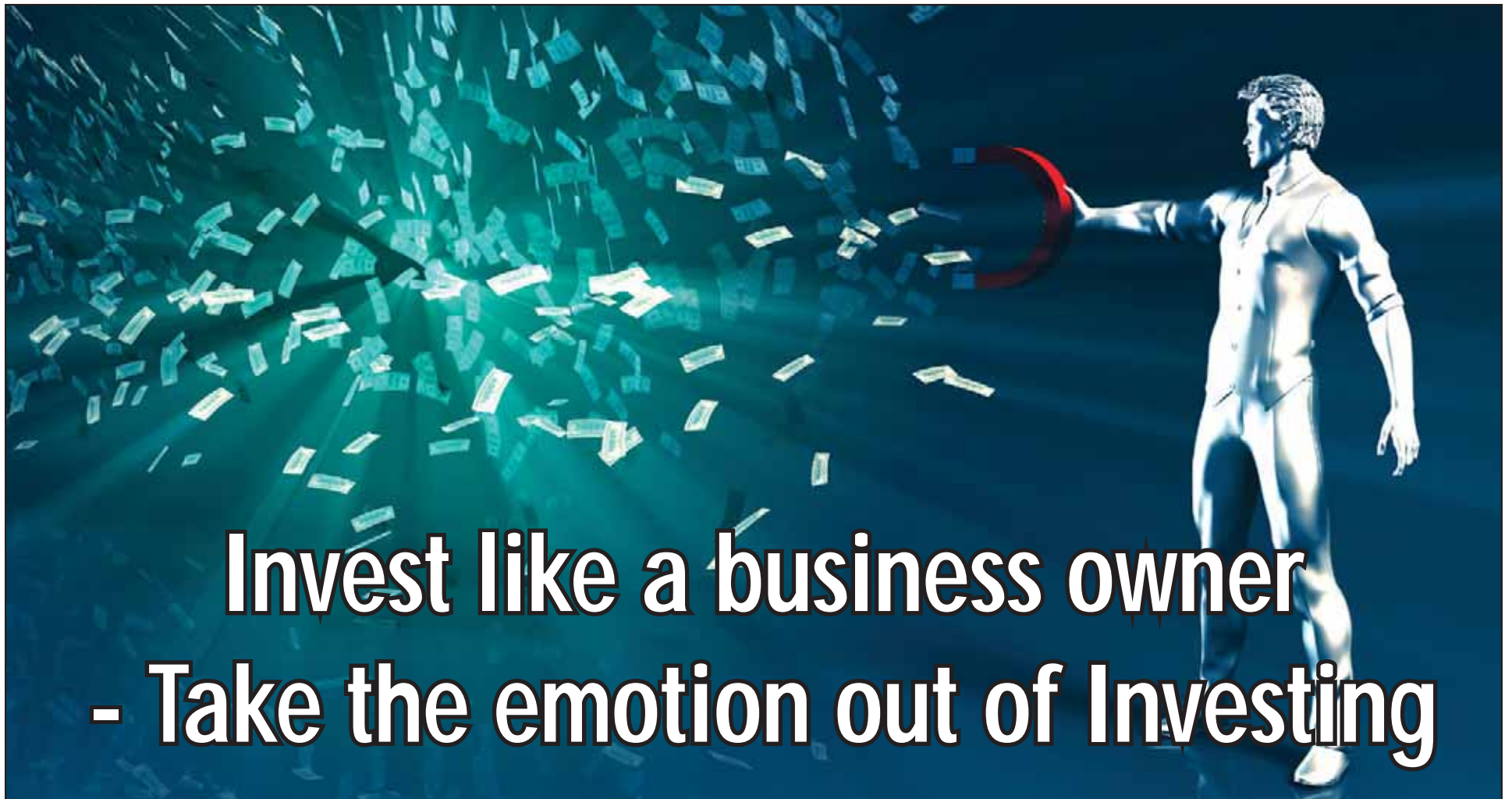


*Uthayan Thurairajah, Ph.D., RSE, LC, P.Eng., FEC, is a Project Manager at WSP with over twenty years of experience in Electrical Engineering and Lighting field, and he also holds a Lecturer position at Ryerson University & professor at Centennial. Uthayan is a member of several Canadian and international 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



# Invest like a business owner - Take the emotion out of Investing

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

Here's what an emotional investor does: Checks the market constantly, worries about every uptick and downturn, rapidly realigns his or her portfolio at the first sign of a stock or market downturn, tends to jump into and out of the market chasing hot stocks and dumping down stocks. And here's one other thing an emotional investor does: Severely limits his or her chances for long-term financial success.

Rational investors know that the best approach is to take the emotion out of investing. Many of them are business-owners and replace emotional investing with a business-owner approach. They have found success incorporating these business-owner principles into their investment plans.

Clear investment goals Rational investors set goals and have the discipline to stick to them. Yes, they want to make money but they set their return objectives against clear short- and long term goals. Goals give you direction, a purpose for the way you spend your money and the way you live. Goals motivate and encourage you. They help you use your money to do the things that are important to you. The first step in financial planning is to think about what your goals are and then to work with a qualified financial advisor to determine how much you will need to save to achieve your goals.

Know when to delegate Successful business-owners know they can't do everything

themselves so they hire capable people with the talent and ability to en-

hance their business. Similarly, rational investors delegate their investment decisions to professionals who have the talent and ability to help them achieve and sustain their financial goals.

The best way to achieve your financial goals is having access to sound financial advice grounded in a comprehensive financial plan. Advisors perform tasks vital in the financial lives of their clients including improved financial literacy, developing a culture of savings and investments, developing and executing a financial plan, selecting appropriate financial vehicles and products and improving investment decision making.

Be risk averse Both rational business-owners and rational investors definitely want to create wealth but they also understand the need for wealth protection. That's why their portfolios are carefully crafted and well-diversified to reduce risk and provide more stable returns over the long-term. Investors are increasingly looking for options to minimize risk within their equity portfolios without necessarily sacrificing returns.

One option for investors is to consider investing in lower volatility equities. When market volatility occurs, recovering from a decline in a portfolio value takes time. The larger the decline, the greater the market gain that must occur to break even again. Since the market declines of 2008, many investors look to reduce risk in their investment portfolios, but realize that moving to bonds may not achieve the returns that



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they desire. A low volatility strategy is designed to participate in stock market growth, but limit the downside risk compared to the broad market

Just the facts Rational investors make investment decisions based on facts not on feelings. They do not get caught up in "the investment flavour of the moment" and are careful to keep their emotions out of investment choices. All investors love the prospect of a rising stock market; however, once the trend starts downward and prices approach historical lows, many investors feel the need to be defensive and retreat to the security of cash or money market instruments. While no one likes a turbulent market, those investors who can focus on the long-term and stay invested stand to gain.

To control risk and volatility, diversification of your investments across asset classes, investment management styles and geographic regions is crucial.

In the know Rational business-owners keep a daily watch on investment news and consider its implications but

like rational investors, they also keep their focus on long-term trends not day to-day fluctuations.

Seize opportunity Rational individuals, business-owners and investors alike, trust their

intelligence. They actively seek money-making opportunities – especially in a volatile market --by hedging, shorting and using other investment strategies to pick up assets at bargain prices. If an unemotional business-owner approach to investing appeals to you – and it should because it's often a better path to financial success – then talk to your professional advisor about the investment strategies that work best for you.

**Disclaimer:**

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





The Association of Sri Lankan graduates of Canada (ASGC) along with York Region District School Board (YRDSB) conducted a fabulous workshop for High School students at the Middlefield Collegiate on Saturday, November 3, 2018.







# Senior Pastors Honored in Toronto

On September 30th 2018 @ at the Markham Convention Centre in Scarborough the East Scarborough Church of God celebrated and honored their senior Pastors Joseph and Bea Persaud for 50 years in ministry.

With over 500 guests in attendance we had the privilege of having The Scarborough MP Hon. Gary Anandsangaree was a guest at this event. Everyone had a wonderful time as we had the opportunity to recognize this man and woman of God who is serving this community of Scarborough for the past 35 years.

**Church - ESP Worship Centre is located @  
869 Progress Ave, Scarborough Ont, M1H 2X7**



## Sivaguru Sellathurai 1918-2018

Sivaguru Sellathurai, brother in Christ:  
Hails from the fertile land, Urumpirai.  
At eighteen his life changed accepting Christ,  
Became faithful disciple and served Urumpirai.

Joined the Government service as translator  
As a government servant was highly appreciated,  
By all superiors, colleagues of the legislature.  
Praised his humility, to accolade his deeds.

A bachelor, well disciplined, robust, handsome  
Wedded a maiden etiquette and charming,  
Lived a contended life in Christ, wholesome  
Begot Children three alive and kicking.

Retiring from Government; began benevolent service:  
His honesty elevated him as Town father.  
Saw bribery and corruption go in to the crevice  
Never raised their heads in council further.

His keenness was service to his Maker,  
Volunteered to serve in His tabernacle.  
Served in all capacities as fellow worker,  
At Maruthanamadam Ashram, a God's domicile.

Came to Canada in autumn of nis life:  
Here too, volunteered to translate, help  
All seeking Canadian citizenship for life,  
And entered glory with God's fillip

A human peaceful, Cheerful and helpful,  
To all irrespective of any difference.  
All pray to God; give you life eternal, peaceful  
In the land of never return under His Governance.

Brother! You have gone to our maker:  
Leaving all earthly laurels as monuments.  
Pray for all, to the miracle worker  
To shun our sins; without any remnants.

-Kingsley-





## GENIE SISTERS

SAMAYAL  
SANTHAI

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.

**W**elcome 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!

## Raspberry and chia seed jam (additive-free)



### Ingredients:

- ✓ 225g fresh raspberries (can use frozen - 1.5 cups, just let them defrost)
- ✓ ½ tsp vanilla extract/1 vanilla pod seeds
- ✓ 1 tbsp honey
- ✓ 1 ½ tbsp chia seeds

### Method:

Place your raspberries in a saucepan over medium heat. As they become soft, squeeze them until they break down. When it appears to be a sauce-like consistency, add the vanilla and honey and stir until well combined. Take the saucepan off the heat and let it cool down. Once cool, add the chia seeds and mix well. The jam at this stage is essentially done! Fresh jam on sourdough bread is our favourite but if you would like to keep it for longer, transfer it into a clean jar once the jam has cooled completely. When the jam has reached room temperature in the jars, leave them in the fridge for an hour to set.

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

The big C word is coming...Christmas! The time of year when everyone panics, trying to figure out what to get their friends and family. You can't keep buying socks for everyone, you did that last year. Fear not, we have a solution. Our raspberry and chia jam is a great personable gift for your loved ones. But if you don't feel like sharing, or making enough for all and just keeping it for yourself, we won't blame you. This recipe is additive free, artificial sweetener free and only has 4 ingredients

## PRIVATE COOKING CLASSES

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# Veenalayam Temple of Music presents "Musical Blendz"

An evening of musical entertainment of remarkable quality

Proceeds from the event of \$7,000 to be donated to "Valluvar Illam" kids Home in Jaffna

Lovers of Music were entertained to an evening of high quality music by Veenalayam Temple of Music recently at the Tamil Isai Kala Manram hall.



Priya and her team, Jeyanthi of Veenalayam and others with the cheque for \$7,000

The musical evening was presented by Priya Ratnakumar and her team from the Veenalayam Temple of Music. Priya has been a student of Veena music over the past years and has given several recitals, one of which was before the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he visited Canada. She is a student of the well-known internationally recognized veena player Rajesh Vaidya and has played the Veena along with him in recitals.

Priya and her team entertained the audience for two hours and kept the audience spell bound with some popular melodies, a good number being film songs which had become popular among the younger generation.

The proceeds from the event totaling \$7,000 (Approximately over 700,000 in Sri Lankan Rupees) will be donated to "Valluvar Illam", a kids home of nearly 100 orphaned children maintained in Vaddukodai, Jaffna.

Mr. Siva Sivapragasam, Executive Editor of South Asian community newspaper "Monsoon Journal" who was the Guest Speaker for the evening stated in his speech that "Veena music is one of the oldest and traditional forms of classical music in Tamil Nadu and that it was in temples that Tamil music and dance including veena music flourished and was popularized. He mentioned that Veena music is one of the best exponents to display and demonstrate Tamil music and culture.

He also highlighted the fact that Tamil culture is being exported beyond the shores of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka and that Bharathiyar's dream that the Tamil language should flourish throughout the world is now becoming a reality with Tamil Chairs being established in prestigious Universities like Harvard and Toronto. He praised the students of Veena music like Priya and her team for taking this art beyond the shores of Tamil Nadu and popularized it in faraway North America including the great city of Toronto.

Mr. Sornalingam who runs the "Isaikku Ethu Ellai" music organization showered praise on the participants saying that he has never witnessed a show of such excellent music quality in Toronto and called upon the community to support these participants by offering financial assistance so that it will be a source of encouragement for them to continue with their musical journey.

Others who spoke at the event were Mr. Parthi Kandavel, the newly re-elected Trustee of the TDSB and Mr. Dasan Thambyrajah on behalf of Valluvar Illam. Mr. Ragaven Paranthoorthy was the MC for the event.

Priya, her team and members of the Orchestra were honoured at the end of the musical show.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the show.

Picture courtesy: Ekeruvi Aiya)



Guest Speaker Siva Sivapragasam



Parthi Kandavel TDSB Trustee delivering his speech



Priya Ratnakumar at the Veena



Presenting the cheque to Dasan Thambyrajah of Valluvar Illam



Meleni David at event



Mike Ahilan and wife at event



Raj Nadarajah presenting his gift





# Santha Panchalingam elected unanimously as President of Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce

By Siva Sivapragasam

Business Entrepreneur, Award Winner, Sponsor of Chamber activities and long-standing member Santha Panchalingam was elected the President of the Canadian Tamils' Chamber of Commerce for the year 2018/2019 at the recently held Annual General meeting of the Chamber at JC Banquet Hall.

The following are the members of the new Board of Directors:

- Santha Panchalingam - President**
- Thipan Raj - Executive Vice President**
- Raj Rajasri - Vice President, Internal Affairs**
- Vina Devadas - Vice President, Finance**
- Rahulan Sana - Vice President, Community Relations**
- Balamurale Nagarajah - Vice President, Membership**
- Murali Sivaguru - Director**
- Ari A. Ariaran - Director**
- Patricia Peter - Director**

Past President Dilani Gunarajah will also continue to be in the board.

The newly elected President Santha Panchalingam gave a speech outlining his proposals for the Chamber and stressing the need for a property for the office of the Chamber.

The need to increase the numbers of membership for the Chamber was also highlighted by him.

The membership was also presented with a memorandum consisting of the Board of Directors' working guidelines too at the AGM.

*(Seen here are some pictures taken at the Annual General Meeting, Photos by Ekuruvi)*



The newly elected President Santha Panchalingam addresses the membership



Executive Vice President Thipan Raj speaks to the audience



Ari Ariaran - Director



Past President Sritharan Thurairajah



The new Board of Directors with Past President Dilani Gunarajah



Patricia Peter - Director



Mr. Kubes (L) and Mr. Lingam (R)





Special Feature



# Green Breeze 2018 by Isipathana OBA Canada – A Huge Success



Following Green Breeze 2018 Gala dinner dance event held recently, Isipathana OBA Canada team issued the following message via social media.

Thank you for attending the Isipathana OBA Canada Gala dinner dance on the 20th October 2018.

It is our sincere hope that all of you enjoyed and also re-connected to you former classmates, friends and family. This year's event would not have been successful without your support and this will allow our OBA Canada to continue supporting our Alma mater back in Sri Lanka for many more years.

Again, it is with profound appreciation that we say

thank you to all the overseas OBA branches who were here, specially from Sri Lanka, USA, UK, Australia and others for all the support for Isipathana College.

We are indeed thankful to our sponsors, mainly the Platinum Sponsor - Stella Culinary Personnel, the Gold Sponsor - Formula Honda and all other individuals who gave advertisements to complete the 'Souvenir Book'

We also take this opportunity again to thank DJ Chamil and his sound technician Rohan Jainudeen for pulling a 'Miracle' with the backup sounds and

making it smooth, members of the Band and not forgetting the Scarborough Convention Centre – (Management and the Staff) for cooperation and giving us the best.

Last but not least the Isipathana OBA Canada's EXCO team for putting this Gala event and working tirelessly to meet the satisfaction all-round.

Thank you again and see all in 2020

**GO PATHANA GO**

Photo Courtesy via facebook:  
The Sri Lankan Anchorman









# Intolerable Insult on the Incredible PM. Justin Trudeau



Official portrait of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



Samy Appadurai

The recent inappropriate remarks made by head of states and those who hold vital positions in their respective governments directed towards the right Honourable Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau are not only a slap in his face but an insult for a well-reputed, democratic and young but very matured nation Canada. Regardless of our political differences, when it comes to any matters from a foreign country, I strongly believe that it is our moral obligation to stand by him.

Larry Kudlow, economic adviser for U.S. President Donald Trump called Prime Minister Justin Trudeau "little punk kid running Canada" in October 2018. Without any doubt, it is crystal clear that this statement is in reaction to the current measures taken on the Canadian and U.S. trade relationship and the attempt to bridge the U.S. deficit on trade with Canada by the U.S. President. As far as the U.S. President is concerned there is a global war against the deficit on the balance of trade in the U.S. and it has to be eliminated in a drastic manner. In particular, the fights against countries like China, Canada, European Union and India and those perceived to have been taking advantage of exporting more goods and services for the U.S. and draining its purse and purchasing comparatively less.

He did not bother to give some kind of consideration to the members of the North American Free Trade Agreement, (NAFTA) partners, Canada and Mexico. In fact, the agreement was signed by the leaders of all three-member nations on December 17, 1992. The goal of NAFTA was to eliminate barriers to trade and investment between the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The implementation of NAFTA on January 1, 1994, brought the immediate elimination of tariffs on more than one-half of Mexico's exports to the U.S. and more than one-third of U.S. exports to Mexico.

The primary purpose of this free trade was to have an assured market for the services and products among the three nations and give priority in trade first to their members before negotiating any trade matters with non-member nations. It was expected to be somewhat like what has been implemented by the European Union. It was very unfortunate that each of the members acted independently, even with the consent of the

members, made free trade agreements with countries like China, India and the European Union. In my opinion, it was an unrealistic ambitious plan because each of the three members have unique economic strengths, structures, international relationships, and demographic patterns where as in the case of the members of the European Union, they have many things in common.

The U.S. President ignored the cordial and special relationship that both the US and Canada have been having for years and treated it like any other country. He made very heavy restrictions on Canadian exports to the U.S. and imposed tariffs against Canadian-made steel and aluminum. Recently he even said that Canada has treated American farmers very poorly for a very long time, while hinting at possible action against the Canadian lumber industry.

The war of words began to fire at the 44th - G7 summit held on 8-9 June 2018, in La Malbaie Quebec, hosted by Canada. Among the seven nations France, Germany and some other nations to some extent were isolated from the U.S. due to the fact that they were not pleased by the drastic measures taken by the U.S. President. I believe that the U.S. President had the conviction that international trade some potential trade partners like China, Mexico, Canada and European Union had been taking mean advantage over the U.S. and in fact he was very furious and uttered inappropriate comments.

It was on 10th June 2018 after leaving for the U.S. from the G7 summit in La Malbaie, Quebec, by the U.S. President Donald Trump and White House Chief Economic Adviser Larry Kudlow, and one of his top aides on trade, Peter Navarro, slammed Trudeau and accused him of a backstabbing "betrayal" of Trump.

On Twitter, U.S. President Trump called the Canadian Prime Minister's behaviour "meek and mild" and accusing him of making "false statements" at his press conference. Furthermore, Trump's economic adviser Larry Kudlow told CNN that Trudeau "stabbed us in the back" while White House trade adviser Peter Navarro told Fox News that "There's a special place in hell for any foreign leader that engages in bad-faith diplomacy with President Donald J. Trump and then tries to stab him in the back on the way out the door." and there's "a special place in hell" for Trudeau. "It was so touching that former

U.S. Ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman, during President Barack Obama's era from April 2014 to January 2017, said U.S. President Donald Trump's top trade adviser Peter Navarro should publicly apologize for his "insulting and inappropriate remarks" U.S. President Donald Trump tweet in which he called Justin Trudeau "dishonest and weak". In interviews on CNN and Fox News, U.S. president Donald Trump's top economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, and senior trade adviser, Peter Navarro, used disparaging adjectives "amateurish," "rogue," "sophomoric" and vaguely accused Justin Trudeau of a "double-cross" and "betrayal."

When the U.S. President mentioned that the imported Canadian steel to the U.S. was a national security risk, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau reacted as it is "insulting" and he further said that the idea the Americans would even muse that its closest friend and ally could be a security threat is ridiculous.

I am not surprised by the inappropriate comments about Canada and Canadian Prime Ministers by U.S. politicians. Let me quote from my book "Canada an Evolving Vision," The New York Times, one of the most well reputed newspaper-shaving a mass worldwide circulation has been terribly mocked online for an article published on 17th January 2016 declaring that Canada as a nation of backwardness.

America's northern neighbour was described as "the country that gave the world ice hockey, the snow blower and Labatt's beer" and which was widely viewed as "a frozen cultural wasteland populated with hopelessly unstylish citizens."

"Describing our Right Honourable Prime Minister as a '6-foot 2 self-described feminist who has been a television actor, snowboarding instructor and amateur' "

I would bring back the sweet memory about the prediction that was made by former President Richard Nixon. He did foresee the future of Justin Trudeau who was only four months old in April 1972 when Richard Nixon, attended gala at the national Arts Center in Ottawa on a state visit hosted by Pierre Trudeau. Pierre Trudeau replied, saying should his son become Prime Minister one day, "I hope he has the grace and skill of the President. Although, it has no scientific backing, still it gives some kind of moral boost.

Let me come back to the comment of

"little punk kid running Canada". First of all, mentioning "little," "punk" and "kid" are pretty offensive and inappropriate to describe a leader who has his own vision for Canada. Let's eliminate the younger stage of the chronological age of Justin Trudeau is a barrier or preventing factor for his capability in running a nation. The current leaders around the world capture the power of ruling before reaching their forties, like the Prime Minister of New Zealand Mrs. Jacinda Ardern, 37, and Austrian leader Sebastian Kurz 31. Earlier in 2017, France and Ireland also produced leaders in their 30s. In France Emmanuel Macron, 39, Ireland: Leo Varadkar, 38 in Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, 37, in Qatar: Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, 37, and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is 33. When Barack Obama handed over the Presidency to Donald Trump, 70 he was only 55 years of age and in no way was a younger age was a barrier for the efficiency of Obama in terms of his performance.

In fact, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is not the youngest Canadian Prime Minister; that title belongs to The Right Honourable Joe Clark was sworn into the office of Prime Minister on June 4th, 1979 at the age of 39, the day before his 40th birthday.

The remark "little punk kid" is of particular concern. Does it mean that Justin Trudeau is a trouble maker or immature person for the position that he is holding as Prime Minister or an aggressive or a violent person? It is absolutely biased or immature comment to level against a leader who has his own vision for his nation. He is not arrogant in his approach like his counterpart in the south. I presume there are three reasons for making such an opinion on Justin Trudeau such as his priority for bridging the gender gap by making promotions on it in every given opportunity, as having almost a half of cabinet ministers in his government and also in other areas.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says he told U.S. President Donald Trump at the G7 summit that U.S. tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum are "insulting," and Canadians don't "take it lightly." (The Canadian Press)

It was in June 2018, the US President attacked the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, by pledging to "punish" the people of Canada economically because of the post-G7 news conference in which Trudeau criticized Trump's tariffs.

"That's going to cost a lot of money for the people of Canada. He learned. You can't do that. You can't do that," Trump said in Singapore after meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

He brought this issue on G7 Summit-2018 as one of the priority agendas. He also made a statement on April 26, 2018 as follows

"Women's empowerment is a key driver of economic growth that works for everyone. All of us benefit when women can participate freely, fully, and equally in our economies and society, and supporting and empowering women and girls must be at the heart of the decisions we make.

"That is why we made gender equality and women's empowerment a central theme of Canada's G7 Presidency - and created the Gender Equality Advisory Council for Canada's G7 Presidency. Thanks to the Council, we will make sure a focus on gender equality guides the work done at the G7 Leaders' Summit - and set a precedent for the G7 going forward.

"In discussions with the Council and the Women 7 (W7), a formal G7 engagement group, as well as other feminist leaders, we explored ways we can promote gender equality and women's empowerment through the G7 and beyond. The W7 and the Council bring together feminist leaders and advocates from around the world who are trailblazers in their communities. Thanks to their work and to generations of feminist leadership, we have made important progress toward a world where everyone, no matter their gender identity, can realize their full potential."

"Gender equality must play a key role in creating lasting solutions to the challenges we face as a world - whether building economies that work for everyone, preparing for jobs of the future, fighting climate change, or advancing peace and security. Investing in girls' education, especially in crisis situations, is a vital part of making that a reality"

The second move that our Prime Minister has taken a bold step in accepting over 25,000 refugees from Syria as soon as he was selected Prime Minister and so far, the majority of Canadians has accepted it and also extended their warm welcome and it shows that his drastic move has been one of his great achievements. It is a great move and I do not want to paint this action with different color but it also has a long-term vision in protecting the image of the nation

and also acknowledging the law-abiding Canadian Muslims who has considered Canada as their nation and also cool down the anti-western feeling among the radicals. I strongly believe that he has taken such a step in achieving with multi-dimensional targets and also look into the overall stability, security, and protection of Canada.

Apart from the acceptance of Syrian refugees, Canada has been awarded several times by international organizations including the United Nations for its unique Immigration policies and its executions without any political or hidden agenda behind and in no way, Canada is ready to deviate from its path, because the U.S. wants it.

Canada is always maintaining a very special relationship with the U.S. but it does not mean Canada is ready to dance to the alternative's tunes played by U.S. presidents, like Obama or Trump or anyone else.

U.S. President Trump's assertion that tariffs on Canadian exports of steel to the US is on the grounds of national security is totally absurd. The Canadian Prime Minister politely and carefully replied to the U.S. president "It would be with regret but it would be with absolute certainty and firmness that we move forward with retaliatory measures on July 1st, 2018 applying equivalent tariffs to the ones that the Americans have unjustly applied to us."

"I have made it very clear to the president that it is not something we relish doing, but it is something that we absolutely will do, because Canadians: we're polite, we're reasonable, but we also will not be pushed around."

President Trump at times exaggerates his views and makes unrealistic judgments for example, during this battle of words with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau he said about the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as "Well he is very talented. Anybody who takes over a situation like he did at 26 years of age and is able to run it, and run it tough" when he met him in Singapore

According to the former U.S. President Richard Nixon's tape recording is among 200 hours of new tapes and 90,000 pages of documents recently released by the Nixon Library. Nixon insulted Pierre Trudeau as a "Son of a bitch" to his treasury Secretary John Connally. It was too in similar circumstances, about the economy and trade between Canada and U.S. According to the source, the two hours conversation between U.S. presi-

dent Nixon and Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau the President called Trudeau "an asshole" and a "pompous egghead." Nixon was more of having a protectionist trade policy on the U.S. economy and it was known as "The Nixon Shock". Pierre Trudeau reacted as "I am not a nationalist, I am not a protectionist. If you were going to take a very protectionist trend, our whole economy is so importantly tied to yours, we'd have to make some very fundamental decisions."

As far as the deradicalization and fight against global and national terrorist activities Justin Trudeau is very diplomatic in moving his pieces on the chess board. Although he has recognized the adverse effects of the terrorists, still Canada was least targeted among the most of the western nations by certain terrorist organizations and therefore Canada has to be smart in not becoming over involved with risk in order to the satisfy the U.S. or any other highly ranked nations. That is why Justin Trudeau clearly mentioned his stand at the beginning itself. He said at the G20 summit in Antalya, Turkey that

"We made a clear commitment in the campaign to stop the bombing mission by Canadian jets and replace it with a role for Canada that is still a serious military role, but leaned more towards training of local troops to be able to bring the fight directly to [ISIS]," he said, referring to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. "That's the commitment we made very clearly throughout the campaign and we have a mandate to do that." He further said that Canada will "do its part" in the military fight against ISIS, but remains committed to withdrawing warplanes from the mission. I am sure that it wouldn't be a pleasing stand for the U.S.

There is no doubt that Canada is not immune to terrorist activities and it has been planted even Canada was declared as an independent nation on July 01, 1867. Even today, terrorists have penetrated into Canada and operated in many ways and the Canadian intelligence agents should have known about it and have been involved in taking necessary actions against it. They are recruiting innocent citizens by brain washing, making propaganda, in magnifying their strength, and exaggerating the weaker points in the western world in particular, making use of the resources of these nations for their activities both in and out of the respective

targeted countries particularly in the western world.

Canada comparatively has not been involved in many of the world controversial issues and also hardly interferes in the local affairs in a manipulative manner on the international scene. Whereas the U.S. as a super power and facing rivalry with Russia and China has been in very manipulative in certain actions. The former colonial countries like the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, and Holland have certain old accounts to be settled with the former colonial ruled but independent nations today. Whereas Canada is neither a former colonial ruler nor super power in its status. Canada does not need to reveal all of its objectives, plans and actions to the other allies or friendly nation.

There have been many occasions Canada has stood on its own and did not cooperate with other nations like the U.S. Let me cite one of them. Former Prime Minister Jean Chretien refused to participate in the unilateral decision made by former U.S. President George W. Bush in the war against Iraq in 2003 as a retaliation. He further mentioned that without a resolution from the UN Security Council he would not make any military commitment. Britain joined the U.S. but Canada did not. Jean Chretien appeared on CTV's Power Play on Tuesday, March 12, 2013 and said that

"Unfortunately, a lot of people thought sometimes that we were the 51st state of America. It was clear that day that we were not."

Chretien also said he was not convinced that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction - the threat that fuelled support for a U.S.-led invasion of the country. He also mentioned that "I had to send troops in many places when I was Prime Minister and it's always a worry you have because you're asking young Canadians to go abroad and some will not come back," Chretien said.

In the end, the comments made towards our Prime Minister are not acceptable whatsoever. It is a point of pride for us Canadians that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has not responded in a similar manner.

However, it must be made clear that our reluctance to respond to such remarks with equal fire and our politeness and tolerance are not signs of weakness. We Canadians are tough as nails, we just prefer to do our way-with class and with grace.



## Intolerable Insult on the



Official portrait of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



**Samy Appadurai**

The recent inappropriate remarks made by head of states and those who hold vital positions in their respective governments directed towards the right Honourable Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau are not only a slap in his face but an insult for a well reputed, democratic and young but very matured nation Canada. Regardless of our political differences, when it comes to any matters from a foreign country, I strongly believe that it is our moral obligation to stand by him.

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members, made free trade agreements with countries like China, India and the European Union. In my opinion, it was an unrealistic ambitious plan because each of the three members have unique economic strengths, structures, international relationships, and demographic patterns where as in the case of the members of the European Union, they have many things in common.

The U.S President ignored the cordial and special relationship that both the US and Canada have been having for years and treated it like any other country. He made very heavy restrictions on Canadian exports to the U.S and imposed tariffs against Canadian-made steel and aluminum. Recently he even said that Canada has treated American farmers very poorly for a very long time, while hinting at possible action against the Canadian lumber industry.

The war of words began to fire at the 44th - G7 summit held on 8-9 June 2018, in La Malbaie Quebec, hosted by Canada. Among the seven nations France, Germany and some other nations to some extent were isolated from the U.S due to the fact that they were not pleased by the drastic measures taken by the U.S President. I believe that the U.S President had the conviction that international trade some potential trade partners like China, Mexico, Canada and European Union had been taking mean advantage over the U.S and in fact he was very furious and uttered inappropriate comments.

It was on 10th June 2018 after leaving for the U.S from the G7 summit in La Malbaie, Quebec, by the U.S. President Donald Trump and White House Chief Economic Adviser Larry Kudlow, and one of his top aides on trade, Peter Navarro, slammed Trudeau and accused him of a backstabbing “betrayal” of Trump.

On Twitter, U.S President Trump called the Canadian Prime Minister's behaviour “meek and mild” and accusing him of making “false statements” at his press conference. Furthermore, Trump's economic adviser Larry Kudlow told CNN that Trudeau “stabbed us in the back” while White House trade adviser Peter Navarro told Fox News that “There's a special place in hell for any foreign leader that engages in bad-faith diplomacy with President Donald J. Trump and then tries to stab him in the back on the way out the door.” and there's “a special place in hell” for Trudeau.” It was so touching that former

U.S Ambassador to Canada Bruce Heyman, during President Barack Obama's era from April 2014 to January 2017, said U.S. President Donald Trump's top trade adviser Peter Navarro should publicly apologize for his “insulting and inappropriate remarks” U.S President Donald Trump tweet in which he called Justin Trudeau “dishonest and weak”. In interviews on CNN and Fox News, U.S president Donald Trump's top economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, and senior trade adviser, Peter Navarro, used disparaging adjectives “amateurish,” “rogue,” “sophomoric” and vaguely accused Justin Trudeau of a “double-cross” and “betrayal.”

When the U.S President mentioned that the imported Canadian steel to the U.S was a national security risk, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau reacted as it is “insulting” and he further said that the idea the Americans would even muse that its closest friend and ally could be a security threat is ridiculous.

I am not surprised by the inappropriate comments about Canada and Canadian Prime Ministers by U.S politicians. Let me quote from my book “Canada an Evolving Vision,” “The New York Times, one of the most well reputed newspaper-shaving a mass worldwide circulation has been terribly mocked online for an article published on 17th January 2016 declaring that Canada as a nation of backwardness.

America's northern neighbour was described as “the country that gave the world ice hockey, the snow blower and Labatt's beer “and which was widely viewed as “a frozen cultural wasteland populated with hopelessly unstylish citizens”

“Describing our Right Honourable Prime Minister as a “6-foot 2 self-described feminist who has been a television actor. Snowboarding instructor and amateur”

I would bring back the sweet memory about the prediction that was made by former President Richard Nixon. He did foresee the future of Justin Trudeau who was only four months old in April 1972 when Richard Nixon, attended gala at the national Arts Center in Ottawa on a state visit hosted by Pierre Trudeau. Pierre Trudeau replied, saying should his son become Prime Minister one day, “I hope he has the grace and skill of the President. Although, it has no scientific backing, still it gives some kind of moral boost.

Let me come back to the comment of

“little punk kid running Canada”. First of all, mentioning “little,” “punk” and “kid” are pretty offensive and inappropriate to describe a leader who has his own vision for Canada. Let's eliminate the younger stage of the chronological age of Justin Trudeau is a barrier or preventing factor for his capability in running a nation. The current leaders around the world capture the power of ruling before reaching their forties, like the Prime Minister of New Zealand Mrs. Jacinda Ardern, 37, and Austrian leader Sebastian Kurz 31. Earlier in 2017, France and Ireland also produced leaders in their 30s. In France Emmanuel Macron, 39, Ireland: Leo Varadkar, 38 in Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, 37, in Qatar: Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, 37, and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is 33. When Barack Obama handed over the Presidency to Donald Trump, 70 he was only 55 years of age and in no way was a younger age was a barrier for the efficiency of Obama in terms of his performance.

In fact, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is not the youngest Canadian Prime Minister; that title belongs to The Right Honourable Joe Clark who was sworn into the office of Prime Minister on June 4th, 1979 at the age of 39, the day before his 40th birthday.

The remark “little punk kid” is of particular concern. Does it mean that Justin Trudeau is a trouble maker or immature person for the position that he is holding as Prime Minister or an aggressive or a violent person? It is absolutely biased or immature comment to level against a leader who has his own vision for his nation. He is not arrogant in his approach like his counterpart in the south. I presume there are three reasons for making such an opinion on Justin Trudeau such as his priority for bridging the gender gap by making promotions on it in every given opportunity, as having almost a half of cabinet ministers in his government and also in other areas.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says he told U.S. President Donald Trump at the G7 summit that U.S. tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum are “insulting,” and Canadians don't “take it lightly.” (The Canadian Press)

It was in June 2018, the US President attacked the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, by pledging to punish “the people of Canada” economically because of the post-G7 news conference in which Trudeau criticized Trump's tariffs.



# Incredible PM. Justin Trudeau



pm.gc.ca

“That’s going to cost a lot of money for the people of Canada. He learned. You can’t do that. You can’t do that,” Trump said in Singapore after meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong UN.

He brought this issue on G7 Summit-2018 as one of the priority agendas. He also made a statement on April 26, 2018 as follows

“Women’s empowerment is a key driver of economic growth that works for everyone. All of us benefit when women can participate freely, fully, and equally in our economies and society, and supporting and empowering women and girls must be at the heart of the decisions we make.

“That is why we made gender equality and women’s empowerment a central theme of Canada’s G7 Presidency – and created the Gender Equality Advisory Council for Canada’s G7 Presidency. Thanks to the Council, we will make sure a focus on gender equality guides the work done at the G7 Leaders’ Summit – and set a precedent for the G7 going forward.

“In discussions with the Council and the Women 7 (W7), a formal G7 engagement group, as well as other feminist leaders, we explored ways we can promote gender equality and women’s empowerment through the G7 and beyond. The W7 and the Council bring together feminist leaders and advocates from around the world who are trailblazers in their communities. Thanks to their work and to generations of feminist leadership, we have made important progress toward a world where everyone, no matter their gender identity, can realize their full potential.”

“Gender equality must play a key role in creating lasting solutions to the challenges we face as a world – whether building economies that work for everyone, preparing for jobs of the future, fighting climate change, or advancing peace and security. Investing in girls’ education, especially in crisis situations, is a vital part of making that a reality”

The second move that our Prime Minister has taken a bold step in accepting over 25,000 refugees from Syria as soon as he was elected Prime Minister and so far, the majority of Canadians has accepted it and also extended their warm welcome and it shows that his drastic move has been one of his great achievements. It is a great move and I do not want to paint this action with different color but it also has a long-term vision in protecting the image of the nation

and also acknowledging the law-abiding Canadian Muslims who has considered Canada as their nation and also cool down the anti-western feeling among the radicals. I strongly believe that he has taken such a step in achieving with multi-dimensional targets and also look into the overall stability, security, and protection of Canada.

Apart from the acceptance of Syrian refugees, Canada has been awarded several times by international organizations including the United Nations for its unique Immigration policies and its executions without any political or hidden agenda behind and in no way, Canada is ready to deviate from its path, because the U.S wants it.

Canada is always maintaining a very special relationship with the U.S but it does not mean Canada is ready to dance to the alternative’s tunes played by U.S presidents, like Obama or Trump or anyone else.

U.S President Trump’s assertion that tariffs on Canadian exports of steel to the U.S is on the grounds of national security is totally absurd. The Canadian Prime Minister politely and carefully replied to the U.S president “It would be with regret but it would be with absolute certainty and firmness that we move forward with retaliatory measures on July 1st, 2018 applying equivalent tariffs to the ones that the Americans have unjustly applied to us.”

“I have made it very clear to the president that it is not something we relish doing, but it is something that we absolutely will do, because Canadians: we’re polite, we’re reasonable, but we also will not be pushed around.”

President Trump at times exaggerates his views and makes unrealistic judgments for example, during this battle of words with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau he said about the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as “Well he is very talented. Anybody who takes over a situation like he did at 26 years of age and is able to run it, and run it tough” when he met him in Singapore

According to the former U.S President Richard Nixon’s tape recording is among 200 hours of new tapes and 90,000 pages of documents recently released by the Nixon Library. Nixon insulted Pierre Trudeau as a “Son of a bitch” to his Treasury Secretary John Connally. It was too in similar circumstances, about the economy and trade between Canada and U.S. According to the source, the two hours conversation between U.S presi-

dent Nixon and Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau the President called Trudeau “an asshole” and a “pompous egghead.” Nixon was more of having a protectionist trade policy on the U.S economy and it was known as “The Nixon Shock”. Pierre Trudeau reacted as “I am not a nationalist, I am not a protectionist. If you were going to take a very protectionist trend, our whole economy is so importantly tied to yours, we’d have to make some very fundamental decisions.”

As far as the deradicalization and fight against global and national terrorist activities Justin Trudeau is very diplomatic in moving his pieces on the chess board. Although he has recognized the adverse effects of the terrorists, still Canada was least targeted among the most of the western nations by certain terrorist organizations and therefore Canada has to be smart in not becoming over involved with risk in order to satisfy the U.S or any other highly ranked nations. That is why Justin Trudeau clearly mentioned his stand at the beginning itself. He said at the G20 summit in Antalya, Turkey that

“We made a clear commitment in the campaign to stop the bombing mission by Canadian jets and replace it with a role for Canada that is still a serious military role, but leaned more towards training of local troops to be able to bring the fight directly to [ISIS],” he said, referring to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. “That’s the commitment we made very clearly throughout the campaign and we have a mandate to do that.” He further said that Canada will “do its part” in the military fight against ISIS, but remains committed to withdrawing warplanes from the mission. I am sure that it wouldn’t be a pleasing stand for the U.S.

There is no doubt that Canada is not immune to terrorist activities and it has been planted even Canada was declared as an independent nation on July 01, 1867. Even today, terrorists have penetrated into Canada and operated in many ways and the Canadian intelligence agents should have known about it and have been involved in taking necessary actions against it. They are recruiting innocent citizens by brain washing, making propaganda, in magnifying their strength, and exaggerating the weaker points in the western world in particular, making use of the resources of these nations for their activities both in and out of the respective

targeted countries particularly in the western world.

Canada comparatively has not been involved in many of the world controversial issues and also hardly interferes in the local affairs in a manipulative manner on the international scene. Whereas the U.S as a super power and facing rivalry with Russia and China has been in very manipulative in certain actions. The former colonial countries like the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, and Holland have certain old accounts to be settled with the former colonially ruled but independent nations today. Whereas Canada is neither a former colonial ruler nor super power in its status. Canada does not need to reveal all of its objectives, plans and actions to the other allies or friendly nation.

There have been many occasions Canada has stood on its own and did not cooperate with other nations like the U.S. Let me cite one of them. Former Prime Minister Jean Chretien refused to participate in the unilateral decision made by former U.S President George W Bush in the war against Iraq in 2003 as a retaliation. He further mentioned that without a resolution from the UN Security Council he would not make any military commitment. Britain joined the U.S but Canada did not. Jean Chretien appeared on CTV’s Power Play on Tuesday, March 12, 2003 and said that

“Unfortunately, a lot of people thought sometimes that we were the 51st state of America. It was clear that day that we were not.”

Chretien also said he was not convinced that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction – the threat that fuelled support for a U.S.-led invasion of the country. He also mentioned that “I had to send troops in many places when I was Prime Minister and it’s always a worry you have because you’re asking young Canadians to go abroad and some will not come back,” Chretien said.

In the end, the comments made towards our Prime Minister are not acceptable whatsoever. It is a point of pride for us Canadians that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has not responded in a similar manner.

However, it must be made clear that our reluctance to respond to such remarks with equal fire and our politeness and tolerance are not signs of weakness. We Canadians are tough as nails, we just prefer to do our way-with class and with grace.



Compiled by  
*Kidambi Raj*

November 06, 2018

# DEEPAVALI



DEEPAVALI means series of lights and is derived from Deepa meaning "light or lamp" and Avali meaning "series, line or row". It is also known as "deepa utsava" or festival of lights. Deepavali or Diwali as it is called in Northern India, dates back to ancient times in India, as a festival after the summer harvest in the Hindu calendar month of Karthikai (October – November). The festival is mentioned in sanskrit texts such as Padma Purana and Skanda Purana, both completed in the second half of the 1st millennium AD but believed to have been expanded from a core text from an earlier era. The lamps are mentioned in Skanda Purana to symbolically represent parts of Sun, the cosmic giver of light and energy to all life, who seasonally transitions in the Hindu calendar month of Karthikai.

Deepavali is celebrated by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and some Buddhists to mark different historical events and stories, but they all symbolize the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, good over evil and hope over despair. It is a festive restatement of the Hindu belief that the good ultimately triumphs over evil.

There is significant variation in practices and rituals based on the region. Depending on the region, prayers are offered before one or more deities, with most common being Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth and prosperity.

How is Deepavali celebrated in South India and Sri Lanka:

Deepavali is a festival where people from all age groups participate. They

give expression to their happiness by lighting lamps, decorating the houses, bursting firecrackers and inviting near and dear ones to their house for taking part in a sumptuous feast. The lighting of the lamps is a way of paying obeisance to God for attainment of health, wealth, knowledge, peace, valour and fame.

Deepavali is one of the biggest shopping seasons. People buy new clothes for themselves and family members, as well as gifts, appliances, kitchen utensils, even expensive items such as cars, gold and diamond jewellery. People also buy gifts for family, neighbours and friends which typically includes sweets, dry fruits and seasonal specialties depending on the region.

It is one time in the whole year that children volunteer to leave their beds long before the day begins. In fact, the traditional oil bath at 3 a.m., is the only chore that stands between them and the pre-dawn adventure. They emerge, scrubbed clean to get into their festive attire, and light up little lamps, candles and scented agarbathis, all for setting alight crackers and sparklers.

Who shall set off the first chain of crackers that go boom, bang and vroom? And who is the owner of the 10-minute "banger" that steals the thunder from your little chain of needle-sized crackers? Does the boy next door have more crackers than me? These are some of the things that go through the mind of children that early morning. The competition is stiff, and even the little girls in their silk frocks and their finery watch for the best sparklers and flowerpots, the

rockets and Vishnuchakras, which light up the sky like a thousand stars. Significances and Legends associated with Deepavali:

There are 10 mythical and historical reasons why Deepavali is a great time to celebrate.

1. Goddess Lakshmi's Birthday – The Goddess of Wealth, Lakshmi incarnated on the new moon day (Amavasya) of the Tamil calendar month, Karthikai, during the churning of the ocean (Samudra-Manthan), hence the association of Deepavali with Lakshmi.

2. Vishnu rescued Lakshmi – On this very day (Deepavali Day), Lord Vishnu in His fifth incarnation as Vamana, rescued Lakshmi from the prison of King Bali and this is another reason for worshipping Lakshmi on Deepavali.

3. Krishna killed Narakasura – On the day preceding Deepavali, Lord Krishna killed the demon king Narakasura and rescued 16,000 women from his captivity.

4. The return of the Pandavas – According to the great epic Mahabharata, it was Karthika Amavasya when Pandavas appeared from their 12-year banishment as a result of their defeat at the hands of the Kauravas at the game of dice (gambling). The people who loved Panadavas celebrated the day by lighting the earthen lamps.

5. The victory of Rama – According to the epic Ramayana, it was on the new moon day in the month of Karthikai, when Lord Rama, Sita and Lakshmana returned to Ayodhya after defeating Ravana and conquering Lanka. The citizens

of Ayodhya decorated the entire city with earthen lamps and illuminated like never before. In fact it said that, this was the start of the festival of lights.

6. The Coronation of Vikramaditya – One of the greatest Hindu King, Vikramaditya was coronated on this day and hence Deepavali became a historical event as well.

7. Special day for the Jains – Mahavir Tirthankar, considered to be the founder of modern Jainism also attained his Nirvana on Deepavali day.

8. Special Day for Sikhs – The third Sikh Guru Amar Das institutionalized Deepavali as a Red-Letter Day when all Sikhs would gather to receive the Guru's blessings. In 1577, the foundation stone of the Golden Temple at Amritsar was laid on Deepavali day. In 1619, the sixth Sikh Guru Hargobind Singh, who was held by the Moghul Emperor Jehangir, was released from the Gwalior fort along with 52 Kings on Deepavali day.

9. Special Day for the Arya Samaj – It was the new moon day of Karthikai, the Deepavali day, when Maharishi Dayananda, one of the greatest reformers of Hinduism and the founder of Arya Samaj attained his Nirvana.

10. The Pope's Deepavali Speech – In 1999, Pope John Paul II, performed a special Eucharist in an Indian church where the Altar was decorated with Deepavali lamps and the Pope had a Tilak marked on his forehead and his speech was bristled with references to the festival of light.



Compiled by  
Kidambi Raj

Oct. 18 – Nov. 06, 2018

# Kedara Gowri Vratam



**Kedara Gowri Vratam** is one of the important Saivite Vratas. This vratam is observed for twenty one days starting from Sukla Paksha Ashtami (eighth moon day in its growing phase) in the month of Purattasi (September-October). The twenty one day vratam ends on Deepavali Day and is observed with great devotion. The deity worshipped during this vrata is Kedareeswara (Lord Siva). This year the Vrata started on October 10th and ended on Deepavali day on the 29th of October.

**How this Vrata is observed:** Lord Kedhareeswara is worshipped in a *Kalasa* (a metal pot of brass, copper or silver with a large base and a small mouth, large enough to hold a coconut) filled with water and some herbs. They make 21 vrata threads having 21 knots. The worship is done for 21 days and on the 21st day, the culmination day, in a clean decorated area with great devotion the Kalasam is installed over the rice spread on a banana leaf and various foods and fruits are offered to the Lord as their offering. At the completion of the Puja, the fruits and food offered to the Lord are distributed to other devotees as Prasadam.

**Legends associated with Kedara Gowri Vratam:** Brungi Rishi was a great devotee of Lord Siva and he had one great defect. He never prayed or paid attention to Goddess Parvathi and in fact he completely ignored her. Even during the supplicate practice of Pradakshana (circumambulation), he ignored the Divine Mother. To teach him a lesson, both Siva and Parvathi merged into one and appeared as Ardhha-nareeswara before the Rishi. The Rishi did not budge and assumed the form of a Bee (Bee is called Brhunga in Sanskrit and thus his name Brungi rishi) and then pierced the body of Ardhhanareesawara and tried to circumambulate Siva's side alone. When Parvati gets angry Siva cannot do anything,

so Divine Mother withdrew Sakti (power) from Brugha and when the Rishi assumed his form back, he could hardly stand on his feet, this despite intense and rigorous tapas for Lord Siva. Lord Siva had to give him a stick to make him stand up. Lord Siva then pacified Sakti and then made the Rishi realize the folly of ignoring Divine Mother. Thus the Siva-Sakti Aikyata (joining together) was realized on the Deepavali Day by the Rishi and he performed the Kedara Gowri Vrata, himself.

Another legend is from Adi Sankaracharya Bhagavadpada story. The Great Guru Sankaracharya once went to Kashmir, wanting to engage in debate with the followers of the Goddess (Sakti), called as the As soon as he had, reached the place, he was rendered immobile by a severe illness. He was so seriously affected, that he was unable to get up from his bed, he for a moment, also lost the power to speak.

Then, a twelve year old girl came near him and whispered in his ears: "O Sankara, do you think you can negate the cult of Sakti?"

Feeling helpless, Sankaracharya said, "Devi, I have come here for this very purpose, but right now I feel devoid of any potency. When I gain enough power to speak, only then will I be able to do so. Without Sakti, I cannot do anything." The charming girl replied: "O revered preceptor, when you yourself cannot move an inch without your Sakti, how will you refute its cult? O Wise One, know me to be Siva's Sakti – The Supreme power activating this world. Charged by my own energy, you want to negate me?"

His mind now at rest, Sankaracharya bowed to the Goddess, and left Kashmir as soon as he recovered.

The Glory of this vratam is very special, since Gowridevi herself observed this vratam, with full devotion and got to be in half the body of Lord Siva.

## A VISIT TO RICHMOND HILL GANESHA TEMPLE BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS FROM THE TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL

Monday, October 08, 2018



Mayor Dave Barrow and Councilors David West, Godwin Chan, Regional Council candidate Jason Cherniak and Terrence Au, the Administrative Assistant to Councilor Castro Liu all from the Town of Richmond Hill, visited our temple on Monday, October 8th, just 2 weeks before the Municipal elections to have the Blessings of the Deities. Special pujas were performed on their behalf and all of them spent time going around all the altars and then sat and chat with the devotees for a while. Councilor Castro Liu who represents the Temple area and the only one to get elected unopposed could not make it due to some family commitment. Guess what, on Monday, the 22nd

of October, the Election Day, all of them except the Regional Councilor Candidate, Jason Cherniak won their respective races. Several devotees of Ganesha Temple went that night to the Victory Celebrations of Mayor Dave Barrow and presented him with a Garland adorned by the Deity at the temple and conveyed the Congregation's Congratulations and greetings. In his speech the Mayor said "I went with my fellow councilors to the Ganesha temple just 2 weeks ago for Their (Deities) Blessings and see what happened".

Here are some pictures of their visit to the temple and at the Victory celebrations.







# WATERLOO TAMIL FESTIVAL REACHES A MILE STONE; 18 YEARS, STILL GOING STRONG



**W**aterloo: 18years flies so fast, said Mr. Ragu Sivaramakrishnan, the President of Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region. We are growing community with University Students and Academics. It has a small but a very active Tamil Community. The association will be celebrating its 30 years of community partnership. Tamil Cultural nite started as a small festival in the year 2000 and has now become a platform for local Indian and Sri Lankan children to enhance Arts and Culture in this region. A very popular festival among Toronto area arts community.

The 18th annual "Tamil Cultural Nite" was held on Saturday, Oct. 20th

at the Humanities Theatre, University of Waterloo. This performing arts festival is an annual event, held to reflect the rich cultures primarily from Sri Lanka and India. This year's chief guest was Mr. Bryan Larkin, Chief of Police from the Waterloo Region. Mayor of City of Kitchener His worship Berry Vrabanovich, Mayor of Waterloo Dave Jawrosky, Hon. Raj Saini MP for Kitchener and special guest Hon. Bardish Chagger – Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Member of Parliament for Waterloo.

The evening was inaugurated with a Bharatha Natyam performance by the Students of Sri Abiramy Dance

school of Waterloo. It was followed by Miruthangam and Carnatic classical music by the Students of Tarangini Music School. Toronto area music group Satha Ghana Nillayam of Mississauga. They were presented with gifts. Waterloo Region Tamil language class students show cased a Tamil drama. It was performed under the guidance of the drama co-ordinator Mrs. Sugarmini Sri of Cambridge.

Mr. Ragu Sivaramakrishnan the president welcomed all guests and thanked the sponsors for supporting the festival. His speech reflected the association's nonpolitical commitment and welcoming immigration to Waterloo Region and also strong vision to promote

our arts and culture in the region. The festival included Bharatha Natyam Dance presented by the students of Selvi Sureshwaren of Sri Abiramy dance academy of Waterloo and Malayalee fusion dance performance by the students of Leena of Cambridge. Local and University of Waterloo students provided other musical performances.

The Cultural Nite is sponsored by the City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener, City of Cambridge, Investors Group and RE/MAX Real Estate. This year's festival attracted around 600 guests in and around the Waterloo Region and GTA. The festival is an admission free event conducted by the Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region.











# Indian High Commissioner Vikas Swarup pays visit to Kitchener

by Namish Modi,  
Kitchener Post

Swarup emphasized the importance of Canada-India relations, and urged local South Asians to give back to their country using the skills they have obtained.

KITCHENER — Vikas Swarup, currently the high commissioner of India to Canada, paid a visit to the Waterloo Region on Tuesday, visiting several hot spots, and culminated his day with a few remarks and a question-and-answer discussion with members of the local South Asian community.

Commonly referred to as "His Excellency" Swarup reflected on the importance of diplomatic relations between India and Canada, and was particularly impressed with the "ecosystem" and "world-class" technologies that exist in the region as he spoke at the K-W Crowne Plaza Hotel in Downtown Kitchener in an event organized by the India Canada Association of Waterloo Region.

The 55-year-old wrote the novel "Q & A," which was the basis for Academy Award-winning film, "Slumdog Millionaire."

Swarup, who assumed his post in 2017, was complementary of the South Asian community and the lives they have set up for themselves in Canada.

"You are not only the flag bearers of India in this country, you are also a very important part of the economic, social and cultural fabric of Canada," said Swarup.

"You are the permanent ambassadors of India to this country."

Swarup also emphasized the importance of Canada-India relations, and urged local South Asians to give back to their country using the skills they have obtained.

"This is your homeland now, but that is your motherland," he said.

"I believe few countries have so much in common and so much potential than India and Canada, we are two democracies that truly cherish diversity. You, our permanent ambassadors, need to become much more active in bringing these two countries closer."

Swarup also encouraged parents in the crowd to urge their adult children, (ages 18-30), to visit India as part of the Know India Programme (KPI).

The program involves Indian diaspora visiting India on a three-week trip, gaining exposure to their native roots. The selection process for the program is online, and is heavily funded by the Indian government's Ministry of External Affairs.

"I encourage you all to send your children through the program back to India to understand that culture, because it will make Waterloo Region more powerful," said Waterloo Mayor Dave Jaworsky, who also spoke at the event.

Dignitaries, including Jaworsky and Kitchener Mayor Berry Urbanovic, fresh off their re-election, and members of the Region of Waterloo India-Canada Association welcomed Swarup with open arms on his first trip to the region.

"For our communities, our ties in this area to India are strong, we now



have many students coming here to study at our academic institutions, University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier, and Conestoga College," said Vrbanovic.

Swarup's day, which culminated with his speech and the question-and-answer period in the evening, also included a tour of the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, as well as a visit with the president at the University of Waterloo, Feridun Hamdullahpur. He also visited Wilfrid Laurier on Wednesday.

Swarup previously worked as diplomat for the Indian Foreign Service in the United States, Ethiopia, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Japan. He has also held the position of spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs.

The novelist has also written two other books titled "Six Suspects" and "The Accidental Apprentice."

Swarup received a hero's welcome, and following the speech and discussion, he stood for several pictures with members of the adoring crowd who were sporting formal wear for the occasion.

During the Q-and-A session, Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region representative asked about honouring Mahatma Gandhi with a statue in the region, similar to the one which was put up in Hamilton in 2012.

"As the mayor said, Canada is a land of peace, in a way it's a direct subscriber to the philosophy and legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, and we have to see how we can keep that legacy alive and flourishing in this country," said Swarup in response. "Hamilton, as you know already has a statue of Gandhi, if I have the two mayors flanking me and if either one of the mayors, or both, tell me yes Mr. Swarup, Mr. High Commissioner, we need a Gandhi statue, I'm guaranteeing a Gandhi statue will come."

Swarup insisted that the High Commission in Ottawa as well as the consulates in Toronto and Vancouver are "attentive to your each and every need," including obtaining a visa to India or getting an Overseas Citizenship of India Card.

"The only thing we cannot help you (with) is finding a bride for your son, or groom for your daughter," he said, as the crowd burst out in laughter.



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