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Two year old Arran Narine ushered in the 2019 New Year near the 'Moolasthanam', the main sanctum of Varasiththi Vinaayagar Hindu Temple located at 3025 Kennedy Road, Toronto, Canada amidst the abundance of divine blessings.

The Chief Priest Dr. Vijayakumaran Panchadcharaiyer Kurukkal conducted the ceremonial customaries elegantly, and blessed Arran Narine at the main shrine of Lord Ganesh.

The first sun-up of the year 2019 was bright and pleasant across the GTA and an immense number of devotees visited the Varasiththi Vinaayagar Hindu Temple to begin the year with blessings and a festive atmosphere.

Photo Courtesy by Gana Arumugam of Ninaivukal

Ninaivukal.com - Captures the Moments of Events of Tamils in Toronto

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What to Consider Before Taking a Bank Loan For Your Business

Capital is something really important for businesses to run their business smoothly. Many people switch from job to business to execute their ideas that even lead to great business opportunities. When they plan to start a business the first thing that stops you for a while is lack of funds or capital.

Business Loan

Loan is the best option to raise funds for your business. You can get loans from many financial institutions or banks. You may find the entire process of getting loan little bit complicated that earlier. Now banks have set up new rules for lending funds for businesses especially the small businesses. Thus, you should be aware of detailed steps to get a business loan from any bank so that you can get your loan approved without any hassles. Let us look at the basic and essential steps that will help you apply for a loan from the bank and get it approved.

Create a perfect business plan

When you apply for a loan, the banks want you to present a powerful financial plan which works well for your business. It includes the introduction about you and what the business you want to start is about. The business plan you present should be able to speak about your business goals and

missions and how the business will operate to achieve the goals and mission. A perfect and convincing business plan will help you convince the lender easily.

Explain the spending pattern for the borrowed finances

Banks are interested in knowing about how you are going to spend the loan amount borrowed from the bank. For example, if you are planning to buy equipment, you should seek an equipment loan. In other case if you need funds to keep your business running prior to the debtors offer you money then make sure you apply for a suitable short-term loan. Hence it is better to explain what you are going to use loan amount for to help the bank assess whether the amount given will take care of all your business needs.

Mention the loan amount you need

Before applying for a loan makes sure you do all the calculations to find out the amount of money you need so that it is neither over or underestimated. The reason is that if you seek less money than you need it can land you in financial problems in near future. On the other hand, stating an overestimated amount can again put you in trouble as bank will ask you whether



you have made a perfect business plan after conducting a thorough research. To put an end to all the doubts, make sure you have a better business plan with a proper presentation and a budget.

Be determined about the credit score

Today, all banks verify whether a person who applies for the loan is eligible for the loan. When you apply for a loan make sure you check your credit scores and credit reports. It would be difficult to get a loan if your credit score is lower than expected. If your credit score is low, you can try for a loan that is revenue based. You can put in some efforts to increase your credit score before you apply for a loan from a bank.

Monitor your credit report

At times you could find some errors in the credit report and it happens when you are not attentive. It can pull down your credit score negatively.

That is why you need to keep a check on your credit score by checking files of business credit and personal credit. In case you find any errors, you can approach the credit reporting firm to get it corrected and increase the score after eliminating the errors. It is necessary to investigate credit report as low credit score won't fetch you loan from a bank.

Evaluate the available lending options

Once you check your credit report and find it to be fine, the next you need to do research and create a list of various banks that are feasible to provide the loan type you are looking for. Make sure you pick out the banks that provide loans at considerably low interest rates and offer approval guidelines that are quite flexible.

Maintain accurate financial records

It is easy to get loan from banks when you have corrected and well-maintained financial statements. Banks check the balance sheets you have along with income statements and cash flow statements. If you need assistance for your financial problems, please visit gtacredit.com website or contact Mark at 416-489-2000. Please refer GTA Credit ad on Page 2.

Goodness, Grace and Generosity - Ingredients of X'mas

The Rev. Dr. Irwin Sikamany, incumbent of the St. Margret's Tamil Anglican Church said that 'Grace, goodness and generosity are ingredients of the X'mas' message for believers.

He made this declaration at the annual carol service of the church. In a brief message the pastor explained the significance of X'mas as a season of re-affirming in the values that Christ taught when he first came to this world with a mission that has worked and continue to work for goodness, grace and generosity throughout the world.

In the midst of all the fun and flurry one should follow his example and try his utmost to live according to the values he lived and died for. Christmas is above all a celebration of his glorious values and un-

paralleled design cum agenda for humanity.

The service was enriched by well chosen, meaningful Tamil carols which reinforced the X'mas message in a soul-satisfying manner. "Maanil piranthar", "Pala Pala puthumaikal", "Unnai, ennai meed-ka" were some of the carols which were sung with zest and enthusiasm to delight the devotees in a spiritually captivating manner.

Special presentations by the youths and children enriched the service in a spectacular way. The choir -director Chrisanthy Arunkumar and pothagar ammah Esther Sikar must be commended for the excellent performance of the choir and a relatively memorable carol-service.



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A 2019 New Year's Resolution: Supporting the Immigrant Population in Canada

From 2016-17, 66% of the national employment gains in Canada were attributed to immigrants from 25 to 54 years old and Canadian born workers aged 55 to older. As indicated by this statistic, immigration has become a core aspect of both the Canadian economy and society and will continue to be so as we enter the new year of 2019. As Canada becomes a destination for more and more immigrants from various countries abroad, a welcoming atmosphere as well as a range of supports will be critical to the livelihood of Canadian immigrants in 2019. This time of the year is one for both deep reflection on one's accomplishments, milestones and challenges over the previous year, with that year being 2018. At the same time, the new year is an opportunity to use that reflection to set a new vision on the year ahead. These are often termed resolutions, and the resolution for this year as Canadians can be to better support the hundreds of thousands of immigrants who choose Canada as their home to build a livelihood.

On New Year's Eve, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has promoted the city as being open, that regardless of Brexit, "London will always be open to the world, proud of our diversity and inclusive to everyone." This was iterated only a few months later following a remark by the mayor that the ideas of multiculturalism and diversity was under attack in not only the United Kingdom, but around the world as well. Closer to home, there has been misinformation of decreased sovereignty due to the Global Compact for Migration under the United Nations that Canada recently signed onto.

Most of this stigma came from the federal Conservative Party of Canada, as reported by the Globe and Mail. Professor Craig Damian

Smith from the University of Toronto stated that they were "mimicking and importing far-right political rhetoric from Europe. Their arguments are cut and pasted from xenophobic and self-described de-liberal political parties."

To properly support immigrants that come to Canada in this upcoming year and beyond, it is important to cut through this noise and other forms of misinformation that deny them the choice or non-choice of a meaningful life in Canada. It is critical that conversations and support be rooted in both facts and the rule of law in Canada. There are a great many contributions from immigrants to the social, cultural or economic aspects of Canada and elsewhere that may go unnoticed.

With the Canadian Tamil community for example, an endowment of \$3 million was setup in June 2018 for the establishment of a Tamil Studies Chair at the University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC). Professor Bruce Kidd, the retired vice-president of U of T and principal of UTSC highlighted that a Tamil Studies chair is crucial to unveiling the immigration and refugee settlement experiences in Toronto of the Tamil community through their unique language, history and culture.

As 2018 draws to a conclusion, let us take this time to reflect on what this year has brought for us. In 2019, build a roadmap for yourself and Canadian immigrants to make 2019 a successful year.

Wishing all Monsoon Journal readers and Canadians a Happy New Year with family and friends!

Contributed by **Harrish Thirukumaran**, 2019 Master of Public Policy Candidate, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

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Canada Historical Milestones

January 2, 1908
 Governor General Earl Grey activates the press at the new Ottawa branch of Britain's Royal Mint. With this action, he strikes the Dominion of Canada's first domestically produced coin.



Monsoon Journal

Wishes Readers, Advertisers,
 Well Wishers & Friends
 a Prosperous New Year
 and a Happy Thai Pongal
 January 14, 2019



“Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right” - Oprah Winfrey (born: January 29, 1954) American Talk show host

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

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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

Let the floodgates open - and the people get flooded.

The Northern Province has been hit with the worst floods it has seen in years. We apparently received 3 - 4 times the amount of rainfall we usually do - and being a low lying plain, got hit with a predictable outcome.

This type of disaster is not new to this part of the country. It is something our people have become used to as a fact of life nearly every other year. I wouldn't call the rains we received over here torrential either. We had 3-4 days of continuous rain, but it was a normal downpour of sporadic rain by Southern Sri Lankan standards. Yet, on the second day of the rains, news started coming in of floods in every district of the North; Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Mannar.

At least part of the problem is that our infrastructure is not geared to handle even little puddles - that quickly flow into low lying lands to become major floods enough to displace the various poor, marginalised people living in them.

Allocation of land

The allocation of land in the North is not an accident. It is very much casteist (traditionally) and classist (currently). Even along this stretch of plain land, we have what we call mettukaani (elevated land) and pallakaani (low lying / basin land). In a land prone to regular flooding, the socio-economically dominant people have obviously appropriated for themselves the elevated ground, while leaving for the oppressed peoples the basins to inhabit - a few millimeters of rain are enough to flood these every year. The story is one of a vicious cycle of oppressions within oppressions. It's not just a cycle; it's a concentric cycle. We are a marginalised people in the country, which ensures we don't get the infrastructure development we need - and then even with that, we turn around and oppress those amongst us, ensuring that some of us don't get even the few benefits the oppressors above us see fit to trickle down. Then we keep wondering aloud, what went wrong with the country?

We are living in an Orwellian land where 'all are equal' - but some just happen to be 'more equal' than others. Unless we address the root of this continuous racism, casteism and classism across all levels, we are never going to get anywhere.

People's Plight

Having worked in the aid sector across different districts of the North over the last few years, I am familiar with how this plays out. People pray regularly for rain - many are smallholding farmers in these areas and they depend on rain fed agriculture as they don't have access to pipes, running water or adequate ground water in many areas still. The North is in the harshest dry zone of the country, where lack of adequate water the rest of the year apart from monsoon season is one of our biggest problems. Yet, the people's prayers are consistently for 'just enough rain' and no more. Because just a few millimeters more will swamp their crops, killing it in the process. All their earnings from the anticipated harvest would thus be lost. The farmers' lot is a particularly precarious one here. Too little rain, and the crops parch and die. Just a little too much rain and the crops get flooded and die.

With climate change worsening continuously over the years, the farmers here almost never get the 'just enough rain' that they have traditionally developed their farming practices for.



Troubled waters

Imagine then how alternate droughts and floods every year affect them. The people who feed us are among the poorest in this country, barely able to sustain two meals a day for themselves.

Meanwhile the fishermen cannot go fishing in the heavy winds of the monsoon season either, putting paid to their earnings too. Rain is essential for our livelihoods; our culture is steeped with songs, dances and rituals to invite it upon us. Yet a people left to the mercy of the elements without any of the technological developments known to man to combat it, means the people suffer needlessly every year with displacements, loss of livelihoods and consequently income, loss of their livestock animals for such livelihoods and loss of the assets in their homes with regular flooding. Massive losses all told - and it repeats regularly.

It might be inconceivable to many people living on elevated land or in towns where we get technological infrastructure benefits of keeping flood waters at bay - which privilege most of us remain blissfully unaware of - but there are people in this country who accept as routine the need to displace every year with floods for weeks at a time. There aren't any special storm shelters they can relocate to. They are just displaced enmasse to schools on elevated ground in neighbouring areas. Several families are allocated one small classroom to live in and one toilet to share.

Cooking would be communal, in one large pot, with rice and vegetables cooked together. Hunger might be kept at bay but nutrition wouldn't be the best, in this time when diseases would also be prone to spread and they need their immunities to be strong. Yet for many of the most oppressed people of our land, this is simply an accepted fact of life.

They scurry hard to make a living the rest of the year with the few implements they have, and one hard rain would ensure that their homes are flooded and all that they managed to stock their homes with - much needed furniture and utensils they can barely afford to buy, would be so badly damaged that they would have to come back and buy them again; with money they don't have. And thus living with suicidal levels of debt is another accepted facet of their lives.

Many of them depend on livestock animals for their livelihoods as well - those animals are by no means cheap to buy. Cows, goats, poultry, and dogs. And even if they could be bought cheaply, their lives ought not to be treated so cheaply. The schools that the families relocate to every year do not have facilities to house livestock - obviously. Given that this is a regular occurrence, we should have had livestock paddocks by now to relocate the animals to, instead of letting them die every year - but we don't. The State, as well as the people, have come to depend on NGOs to simply replace the animals every year - only for the cycle to repeat. Some people who love their animals do take the trouble to relocate them alongside too (if given adequate notice before the flooding) but there are several pushbacks against them. It's not at all easy to displace with their animals as they have found through several years of war, and then several years of flooding post-war. The animals just don't count in the scheme of things for anybody doing the planning.

People eating cake doing the planning for people eating coarse bread goes well beyond the time of Marie Antoinette.

Huge numbers of animals suffered for it in the floods here. Disturbing photos are circulating of their drowned corpses. In a land where people themselves have few rights, the animals have none.

Solution

Is all this trauma and damage to the most oppressed of the oppressed peoples living here really necessary or inevitable? Ironically it is not. It can be easily solved by adequate planning and infrastructure development. A good case in point is the island of Mannar. Mannar until recently was the lowest lying of all the districts of the Northern Province - which ensured it was always the worst hit with flooding during monsoon rains. Water levels used to go up to the necks of coconut and palmyrah trees in the region during monsoon times. "Mannar is the basin into which all the waters of the surrounding regions flow with every rain," explained one government official on why they were prone to such terrible floods. Yet, this time, Mannar did not make it to the news in terms of severe flooding. Some 200 families did displace

there too but given their usual numbers, that is an eye-popping improvement. The result is not an accident. The State, with the initiative of Aid agencies funding the project had put in infrastructure development over the last few years around Mannar town which ensured flooding would no longer be as massive a problem as it once was. And the result is that a mass disaster was averted this time in Mannar. Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu without similar benefits went under. Jaffna and Vavuniya while affected to a lesser extent, were still hit too. The Iranamaduru tank in Kilinochchi currently has a capacity of 36 feet - after much renovation to improve its capacity, in order to provide potable water to Jaffna. Officials waited till it had filled to 40 feet before opening the sluice gates - and when they did, they apparently provided just an hour's notice to the people to relocate. The villagers had to relocate hastily with precious few of their belongings as they did not have time to arrange the taking away of their goods or livestock with them. This is just one more thing that could have been easily foreseen and planned for, but was not, ensuring the needless suffering of people and animals alike. If the infrastructure is not in place to save them, at least warn the about-to-be displaced people adequately in advance so that they can rescue what they can? Right now, we just keep pouring disdain over their impoverishment.

Not to say, all people do here is exhibit callousness. In the midst of all this bleakness, many did reach out to help. I do not mean to detract from that. The state, the defence forces, the aid agencies and the common people all did come together to alleviate the problem once it occurred. Many worked extremely hard for which they are owed due thanks.

Yet, this problem could have been mitigated to a large extent with adequate foresight and planning, and especially with adequate investment in infrastructure. The problem is larger than people helping out on the ground once it bursts, which they did do. The issue is one of cyclical oppression trickling down - until it becomes uncontrollable floods. Working to contain such floods involves more than the opening and closing of sluice gates, and sending dry rations to people. Treat such people with forethought, not as an afterthought.



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.

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

Eat more, learn more!

— Sundal —



Ingredients:

- ✓ 1 tin of chickpeas (you can use chickpeas soaked overnight and cooked)
- ✓ 2tbs coconut oil (thengaiennai)
- ✓ 1/2tsp mustard seeds (kadugu)
- ✓ Pinch of asafoetida (perungaayam)
- ✓ 2 dry red chillies (kaaynthamilagai)
- ✓ 1 stalk of curry leaves (karivepilai)
- ✓ Pinch of turmeric (manjal)
- ✓ 1tbs grated coconut (thengai)
- ✓ 2 tsp of lime juice
- ✓ Salt to taste

Happy New Year! It's 2019 and what better way to start the New Year than with a healthy vegan recipe that will keep you on track with that post-Christmas diet. Every recipe featured here is tried and tested and the photos printed are from those efforts, assuring you that the recipes are as good as you expect them to be.

Sundal made from chickpeas is a protein rich snack that is good for children and adults, and with Pongal just round the corner, it's the perfect dish to serve those unexpected guests too.

Method:

Heat the oil in a pan. Add the mustard seeds and asafoetida, once the mustard seeds start to pop add the dry red chillies and curry leaves. Sauté for a few minutes and then add the chickpeas turmeric and salt. Cook for another 2-3 minutes on a medium flame. Add the grated coconut and lime and it's ready to eat. Best served hot/warm.

If you do make this recipe please tag #monsoonjournal and do send us a pic too. Spread the love (and recipe!)

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Dr. Ravi Gnanasundaram Perumalpillai

Ravi Perumalpillai was a self-driven ground-breaker who achieved his goals with humility, quiet confidence and a good sense of humour. He treated everyone as equals. He touched the lives of all those he met. A role model to his siblings and cousins, he was the eldest child of Dr. C. Perumalpillai (veterinary surgeon, founder of the Veterinary Council of Ceylon and Ceylon Veterinary Journal) and Gnanambikai (graduate in mathematics and teacher).

Ravi's education began at Trinity College, Kandy. At seven years (1958) the family left for Khartoum, Sudan, where he attended Comboni College and picked up Arabic within months. He was later sent as a boarder to St. Edward's School in Oxford, UK, where he completed secondary school.

Even at an early age he was fearless, purposeful and wise beyond his years. He was the sole support for his mother when they flew with three other children (aged five years to one) from Jaffna to Khartoum with multiple stopovers over two days, to join his father. He became a competent horseman in Somalia where he would ride through scrubby terrain while on holiday from the UK, and was the chief caretaker and playmate for the pet cheetah owned by the family.

Ravi pursued a medical career of his own choosing, a focused dedication that he cultivated as a young boy in the Sudan where he would demonstrate the physiology of dissected frogs to friends. He qualified from Middlesex Hospital Medical School (now UCL) London with a MBBS (1974), and in 1979 obtained his Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS Edinburgh and England). Further qualifications included: Fellow at Johns Hopkins Hospital (Baltimore USA, 1988) and MA Oxon, FCSS. He became a Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon at the age of 37 at John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford and continued his teaching and research interests as Senior Lecturer at the University of Oxford, for 25 years.

He authored the textbook 'Surgery for Ischaemic Heart Disease', contributed chapters in others including the 'Oxford Textbook of Surgery' and has over one hundred other publications. He was Chairman of Cardiac Services at John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford from 1992-1997. His practice in Oxford included Adult and Paediatric Cardiac Surgery, as well as Thoracic surgery in all age groups. While in the UK, he trained in Cardiothoracic Surgery under Mr. Donald Ross, Prof (now Sir) Magdi Yacoub, Mr. John Wright, Mr. Christopher Lincoln, Mr. Matthias Paneth, and Dr

Bruce Reitz amongst others.

His love and sense of duty to his motherland, however, found him laying early foundations for his work in Sri Lanka when he decided to do his internship in Jaffna in 1974/75 at the Jaffna Government General Hospital. There he worked with and was mentored by Drs Vethanayagam, S.K. Maheswaran and R. Natkunam. Dr. Natkunam, a mentor, wrote of Ravi: "I was impressed by his enthusiasm to do surgery and even more by his decision to do it in Jaffna – at a time when most of the young doctors were going out of Sri Lanka – values no doubt inculcated by your parents. A few years later when I had assumed work in Colombo he told me about his interest in cardiac surgery and would visit me there whenever he was on holiday in Sri Lanka – he would tell me about the rapid advances being made in this field of surgery. In the early 1980s, I was in London for 6 months on sabbatical leave – he was at that time Senior Registrar to the famous Sir Magdi Yacoub - Ravi in fact did most of the operations and I benefited a great lot by watching them work." The focused dedication Ravi had for his medicine and his love to share and serve the community is illustrated in these simple statements.

During the 1990/2000s, he brought complete cardio-thoracic surgical teams from Oxford to Sri Lanka to perform complicated open-heart procedures at the National Hospital, Colombo and the Sri Jayewardenepura Hospital on many occasions. These visits made a significant contribution to the development and establishment of modern-day cardiac surgery in Sri Lanka. In addition, while in Oxford, Ravi trained five surgeons from Sri Lanka namely, Drs. Panna Goonaratne, G.A. Chandima Amarasena, Rajiv Pieris, Mahendra Munasinghe and K. Gnanakanthan.

Other trainees have been from around the globe including India, Brazil, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Syria and Japan. He has operated in centres in all these countries as well as across Europe demonstrating new techniques of heart valve surgery. He had performed over 20,000 cardiothoracic surgical procedures. He collaborated closely with Dr K.M. Cheriyan who was involved with the establishment of the Madras Medical Mission in Chennai from its inception. The current chief of cardiac surgery Dr. S. Rajan was a trainee in Oxford.

Like his father, he was committed to the development of the north of Sri Lanka and to fulfil his wishes Ravi created the Oxonian Heart Foundation



(OXF) to help establish cardiac surgery in the north of the country. Commencing at the Northern Central Hospital (supported by Messrs. Sami and Keshavraj) in 2013, a team from Oxford supported the local cardiac surgical programme and conducted the first of many open-heart surgeries.

At a personal level, Ravi felt he belonged, living in his maternal ancestral home in Kokuvil, Jaffna – where he entertained friends, colleagues, relatives, visiting diaspora and other well-wishers from the community. He loved the air, the water, the food. He encouraged all those he met to invest in the North and East and contribute to the development of Sri Lanka.

To this end in 2017, Ravi personally invested his own resources in an Aloe Vera farm in Allaipiddy in Velanai (Velanai Integrated Agroeconomic Company) to demonstrate the development potential of the area. The company, with other committed shareholders, was established to promote an alternate livelihood opportunity for farmers in the North once the government ban on tobacco growing takes effect in 2020.

He consistently urged senior government officials and diplomats to provide the necessary resources to the North to ensure stability and reconciliation. Nothing need be difficult was his motto.

Taken away from us at a relatively young age, we are proud of our Annai (elder brother) who achieved a lot in a short span of time and was a friend to those from all walks of life. Words and phrases used to describe Ravi from the many messages of condolence we have received include: mentor, teacher, generous, caring, dedicated, hard-working, good friend, a gem, a great loss to society and Sri Lanka.

He will be sorely missed by all of us and our families; including his wife Shanti, children Rajesh and Shahila and spouses and granddaughters, Amara, Layla, Lakshana and Nayantara.

By: Usha, Jeeva and Ranjit
Courtesy: the Sunday Times

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe says 2019 will be a year of challenge to Sri Lanka

PM thanks everyone who strove to reclaim democracy setting aside ethnic, religious and party differences.

By Siva Sivapragasam

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has stated in his new year message that 2019 will be a challenge for Sri Lanka.

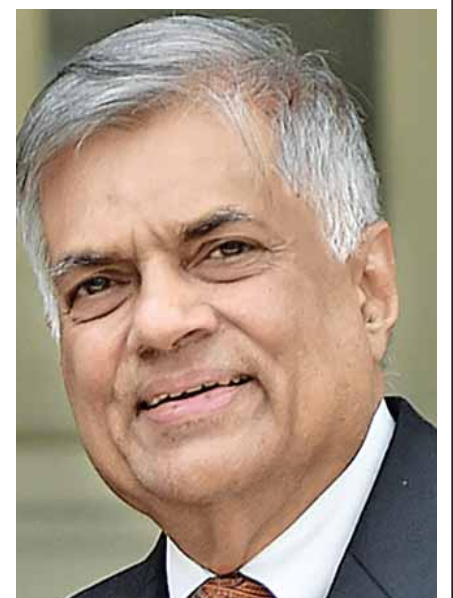
The Prime Minister states that 2019 dawns with new hopes and goals and wished all Sri Lankans a prosperous year ahead.

The government, he stated, is committed to making a better society for our future generations. "As 2019 dawns with new hopes and goals, it is my utmost pleasure to wish all Sri Lankans a prosperous year ahead. It was a real victory for all of us to ensure sovereignty of the people's rule in the country to begin the New Year", he stated.

"I am glad and thankful to everyone who strove in the name of reclaiming democracy setting ethnic, religious and party differences

aside", the Prime Minister remarked in his new year message.

"I look forward to your encouragement, commitment and cooperation", the Prime Minister stated in his new year message.



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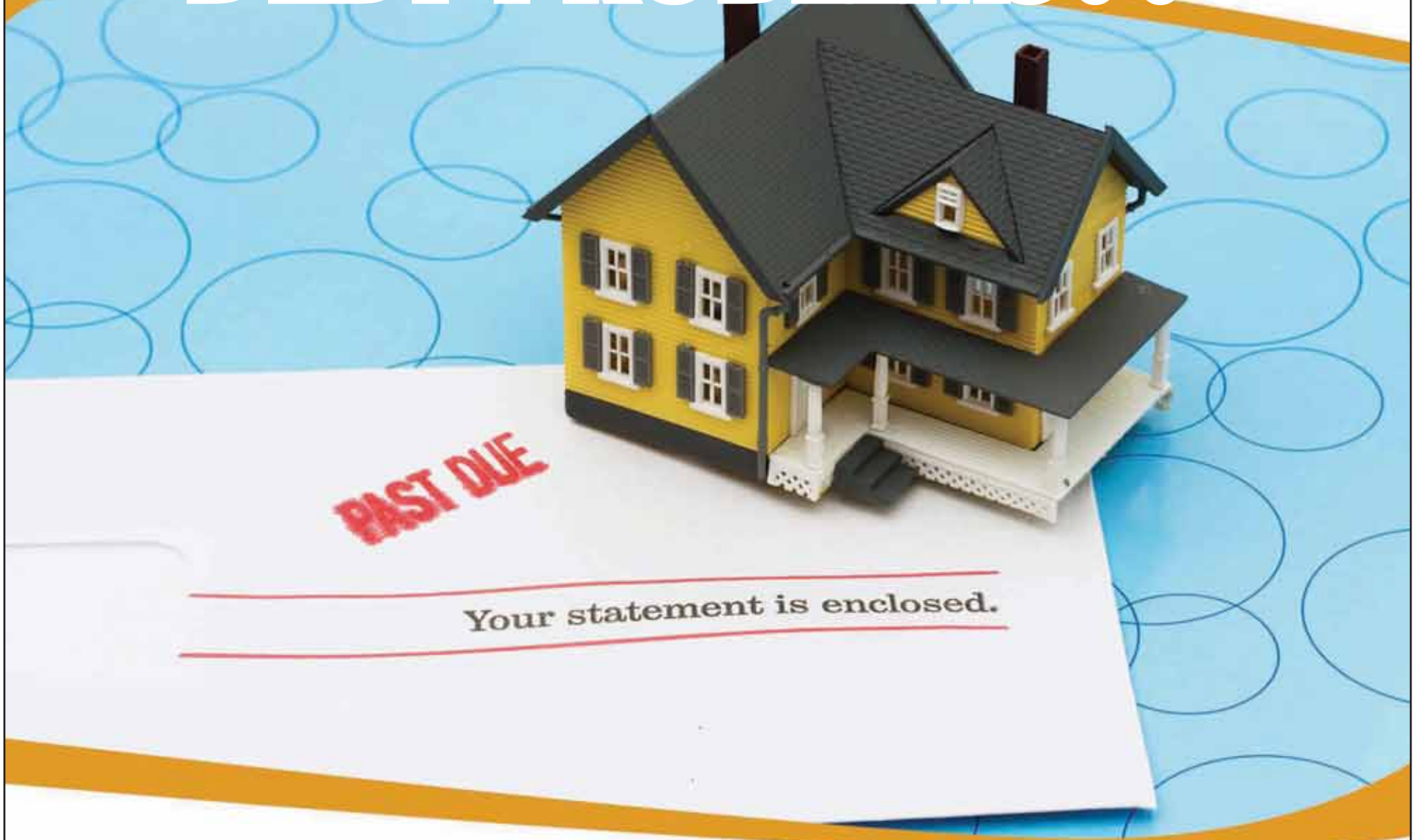
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Scarborough Health Network announces new EVP of Medical and Clinical Programs

Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is proud to announce that Dr. Albert Lauwers – the current President and CEO of Ross Memorial Hospital (RMH) in Lindsay, Ontario – will be joining the organization as Executive Vice President (EVP) of Medical and Clinical Programs.

“We’re honoured to have Dr. Lauwers as part of the SHN team in this newly-created leadership role,” said Elizabeth Buller, President and CEO of SHN.

“Dr. Lauwers’ keen focus on clinical best practices, enhancing patient satisfaction, and engaging internal communities will be integral in our work to shape the future of care in Scarborough.”

Over the course of his four years as President and CEO of RMH, Dr. Lauwers has worked to advance patient safety and quality of care across the hospital. He led teams that successfully developed a service excellence program for staff, improving physician engagement within the organization, and ensuring a balanced operating budget.

Prior to RMH, Dr. Lauwers held a number of physician leadership roles, including President of the Ontario Coroners Association, and Deputy Chief Coroner of Investigations and Inquests. He has been awarded the H.B. Cotnam Award by the Ontario Coroners Association recognizing his contributions

to develop best practice guidelines for death investigation, as well as for developing the Fundamentals of Inquest Course through Osgoode Law School.

Dr. Lauwers is also a member of the Board for the Kawartha Haliburton Children’s Aid Society, and the Hospital Diagnostic Imaging Repository Services. More recently, he completed terms as Chair of the Ontario Hospital Association’s Physician Provincial Leadership Council, and Chair of the Central East Local Health Integration Network Executive Council.

A graduate of the University of Toronto Medical School, Dr. Lauwers also holds a Fellowship from the College of Family Physicians, and a Master’s Degree in Public Policy, Administration, and Law from York University. He is an Assistant Clinical Professor (Adjunct) in the Faculty of Family Medicine at McMaster University, and has been designated as a Canadian Certified Physician Executive by the Canadian Society of Physician Leaders.

“I’m looking forward to working alongside the talented and passionate team at SHN and being a part of the journey to re-imagine the future of health care for this vibrant and diverse community,” said Dr. Lauwers.

Dr. Lauwers will begin his new role at SHN on April 1, 2019.



EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS BUSIER DURING FLU SEASON



Flu cases are on the rise and Scarborough Health Network (SHN) is managing higher patient volumes in all three of its emergency departments (ED).

ED patients are triaged, which means the most serious cases are seen first. If your health care needs are not an emergency, other health care providers that can help include:

- Family physicians
- Urgent Care, Walk-in, or After Hours Clinics
- Telehealth Ontario (call toll-free to speak to a Registered Nurse at 1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-0007)

For holiday hours of service, contact numbers, and maps for medical walk-in clinics, urgent care centres, pharmacies with extended hours, and crisis intervention assistance across

the Central East region, please visit: <https://www.centraleasthealthline.ca/libraryContent.aspx?id=22240>.

PROTECTING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

The best way to prevent the flu is to get your flu shot, which is still available from most family physician offices, community health centres, walk-in clinics, and pharmacies. The flu shot is your best line of defense against the flu, and by getting your shot, you’re also helping to protect your family and friends.

Proper hand hygiene goes a long way to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- If your hands are not visibly soiled, hand sanitizer is an effective way to keep your hands germ-free.

- Washing with soap and water for at least 15 seconds also helps prevent the spread of the flu virus, which can live on your hands for several hours.

VISITING PATIENTS AT SRH

If you are experiencing symptoms such as fever, cough, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, fatigue, weakness, nasal congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, you should avoid visiting patients at the hospital.

Instead, consider sending them a card or email, or give them a call. This will prevent the transmission of your cold/flu symptoms to hospital patients and staff.

Thank you, and best wishes for a healthy winter season.

CANADIAN TAMIL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (CTMA) CELEBRATES ANNUAL GALA 2018 TO RAISE FUNDS TOWARDS A MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT AT THE SCARBOROUGH HEALTH NETWORK

The twentieth Anniversary of the Canadian Tamil Medical Association (CTMA) was celebrated with a Gala at the Scarborough Convention Centre this year

By: Siva Sivapragasam

The event known as “Lights of Healing” was held to raise funds for a mental health project in partnership with the Scarborough Health Network (SHN). The event had a well-turned out attendance of over 750 guests.

The evening’s events, led by emcees Roger Caesar and Manjula-Selvarajah, included a discussion with mental health survivor and advocate, Shannon Lavigne. Another highlight of the event was a dance performed by Irudaya Dance Company. The Gala provided an opportunity to honour CTMA’s work to date, recognize the Association’s partners, network with other healthcare professionals and valued members of the Tamil community.

The President Dr. BaheRajendran delivered a special message in his speech and invited everyone to support this important new initiative that CTMA is undertaking in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) this year. Recently, the GTA has seen an increase in suicide rates in migrant populations, particularly those affected by trauma. Factors that have contributed to this include a deficit in culturally sensitive services, difficulty accessing resources, language barriers, and a lack of awareness.

Sari Greenwood, Director of the Mental Health Department at SHN and Dr. Stephen Barsky, Department Chief Psychiatrist at SHN explained what programs currently are taking place and what the plan will be in the future to support the mental health issues that are currently taking place.

Scarborough Health Network Foundation President, Michael Mazza thanked the Tamil community for their continuous support and was grateful to be the chosen charity to receive the proceeds from the CTMA Fundraising Gala this year.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)



Members of Canadian Tamil Medical Association



Dance Performance



Ontario Health Minister Hon. Christine Elliott in conversation with President Dr. Bahe Rajendran



Current C TMA President Dr. Bahe Rajendran on left with past presidents, L-R: Dr. Shan Shanmugavadeivel, Dr. Rajes Logan, Dr. C.P. Giri, Dr. Victor Figurado, Dr. ArulananthamThangaroopan, Dr. Jegapathy Rajendra and Dr. Vadivelu Santhakumar



Dr. Bahe Rajendran, Mrs. Gowry Bahe, Ontario Health Minister, Hon. Christine Elliott and Logan Kanapathi, MPP



Dr. CP Giri with guests



Sari Greenwood, Director of the Mental Health Department at SHN speaking and watching at stage, Dr. Stephen Barsky, Psychiatrist at SHN and Scarborough Health Network Foundation President, Michael Mazza



Photosynthesis

- The most profound biological process on planet earth

By: Kanagasabai
Theivendirarajah,
PhD (London)

You may wonder how come a simple process that occurs in green coloured plants can be so deep and profound. Yes, this process of photosynthesis is the prime mover of energy to all living organisms including the most advanced creature on earth, the man. The energy needed to drive all biological reactions which is by the way the life that we know of, is provided by photosynthesis. The major components or players in this dramatic process are the green



coloured molecule chlorophyll, water (H₂O) and carbon-dioxide (CO₂). Chlorophyll molecule has the unique property of absorbing the light from the sun and use the light energy to break down the water molecule releasing the hydrogen atom and oxygen gas (O₂). The hydrogen atom with its reducing power is utilized fully in the photosynthetic process through a series of enzyme mediated reactions by the famous Calvin cycle to fix the CO₂ gas to produce sugars. Sugars are the primary source of energy for the formation of all others energy sources like proteins fats etc. in all life forms. We are no exception to this rule; we directly or indirectly depend on the outcome of this magnificent biological process. Our life solely rely on the energy of the sunlight, the transformation of the light energy into chemical energy which ultimately drives all activities is mediated by the wonder molecule chlorophyll.

One of the bi-products of photosynthesis is oxygen. This is the oxygen that is used by all organisms except for a few anaerobic organisms to breath or respire to break down the sugars we consume to generate energy. Without the oxygen on this planet, living forms including man could not survive for long. In other words humanity must understand that the provider of energy for all living forms is the sun, no sun equals no life on this planet. Also if chlorophyll molecule was not formed whether by accident or not in the primordial soup, living forms could not have evolved into the present state. It is also true that if there are no green

plants (chlorophyll) there will be no life. It is for this reason that we must always protect our plants and all other organisms on this planet otherwise we shall all slowly perish. The energy source i.e. the light from the sun is immense; all life forms utilize only a wee bit of this energy. We will not run out of this energy, it may last for millions or billions of years to come. However we can run out of chlorophyll molecule, when we destroy the forests, burn down grasslands, pollute water bodies and the environment in general we reduce the amount of chlorophyll molecule on this planet.

Chlorophyll is a porpyrin molecule, probably formed about 3 billion years ago. You would be surprised to know that the key molecule, hemoglobin involved in the transport of oxygen through the blood stream in man and other warm blooded organisms is a cousin of chlorophyll. Hemoglobin is also a porpyrin molecule with iron (Fe) atom in the center unlike the chlorophyll that has magnesium (Mg) atom in the center. One can easily see the common thread among all life forms. Another cousin of chlorophyll and hemoglobin is cyanocobalamin or B12 vitamin. This molecule has cobalt (Co) atom in the center.

About that time of formation of porpyrin or little earlier another unique molecule DNA was formed on this planet. DNA as you all know has the unique property of self-replication. With the advent of DNA molecule on this planet, cells began to divide or multiply exact copies and that led to

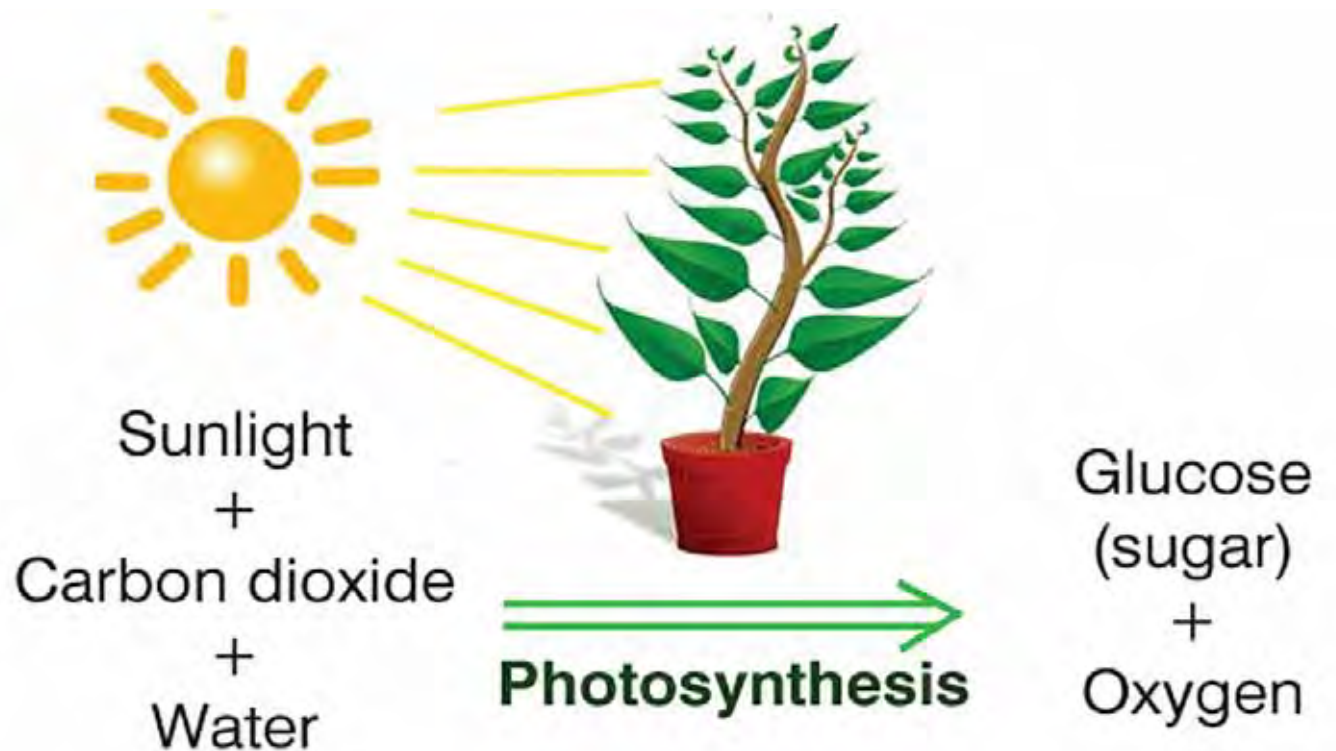
what we know now as reproduction. Reproduction is again the key to all life; no reproduction means there is no continuity of life. In the absence of reproduction, the species will automatically grind to a halt on this planet. In any species whether a microscopic micro-organism, a bacterium or the most advanced species Homo sapiens sapiens, the human being, the wonder molecule DNA directs and operate the plan, of what type of physical and functional character the species should be. Unlike an architect's design of sketches and drawings, in biological plan the information for all structural and biological activities is stored and marked through genes. Genes by the way are DNA of highly specific sequences which ultimately determines the character of the species. I do not want to delve into the details, but one should understand that the design has a common thread of deciphering the genetic messages in all forms of life.

Man has been in the moon but could not find any forms of life and the possibility of establishing life on this satellite of earth was so slim, hence he had dropped the idea of colonizing moon, at least for time being. Now there is a greater interest on the red planet Mars. Probes were sent to Mars to study the Martian atmosphere and the Mars surface. There are plans to send men to Mars to explore the feasibility of establishing some form of life. Who knows one day man may create a micro environment suitable to sustain life by transporting the photosynthetic apparatus either synthetic or live on

planet Mars. There is no scarcity for sun light (energy source) on Mars and if they can generate some water and CO₂, the magical process of producing sugars and oxygen can be ignited. It is not fiction but one day man may start a new cycle of Darwinian evolution on the planet Mars.

Sun's importance on the life of all living objects on the planet earth was felt and in all ancient cultures (Egyptian, Greek, Persian, Babylonian, Native Americans, many Asian etc..) and people worshipped this brightest star seen in the infinite space around us. The worship of sun may be nearly old as the mankind itself. Tamil people all over the world celebrate Thai Pongal, a harvest festival dedicated to the sun god. On the Tamil heritage month of January in Canada many celebrate the Pongal festival and pay homage to the sun that provides energy ("Sakthi") to all.

For all life on this planet, the sun and its bright light is supreme and all mighty. Sun is not eternal, formed about 4.5 billion years ago and may disappear. This tragedy is definitely not going to happen for billions of years to come. Sun light provides the energy for the survival and continuity of all life on earth. The same light shines in all the trillions of stars on the universe and there is always a possibility that some form of life may exist in some planets of some stars. Life is beautiful and magnificent; this beautiful entity in all forms is to be loved, cared and protected at all times.





Take it or Leave it

The Temporary and the Permanent



“Self-Knowledge allows that alignment of the temporary and permanent to take place.”

What is Self-Knowledge all about? You. You’ve got to get the temporary you aligned so that you can understand, accept, and enjoy the permanent you.

The temporary you is wild. It had to be wild to survive in this world. It’s like a company that owns a bunch of delivery trucks. All the trucks go to a dock every night to pick up something, and at the dock, you notice there are colored streaks on the wall. You can bet that for every color on the wall, there is a truck out there, somewhere with a big scrape on it.

People say “Why do I become like I do in the world”? That is the way the world is formed. You

are not formed like that. Wherever you go, you rub against something. And when you rub against it, something gives, and it’s not the wall. The world isn’t going to change --- you are. And pretty soon, after enough walls, enough dents, enough bumps ---- it’s not as clean and pristine as it used to be. You can’t go back in time and change the shape or the color. All you can do is to say “Okay”

And what does Self- Knowledge do? It aligns. It allows the alignment of the temporary and the permanent to take place. The temporary is temporary. But it is a great tool. It can see, feel, think, laugh. It can enjoy.

So can we begin to focus the temporary a little bit towards that which is really permanent?. The permanent is permanent. It was, is, will be. It’s in

you, it’s outside of you. It’s everywhere. Nothing is without it --- it is in everything, but it is not everything. It’s in a car, but it’s not a car. It’s in your nail, but it is not a nail. It’s in your finger, but it is not a finger. It’s in you. You want to call it energy? Fine. You don’t want to label it? That’s fine too. It’s feelings don’t get hurt. It is not looking for the same things we are. We look for tags. Recognition. That which is perfect has no reason to look for Recognition.”

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Aapravasi Ghat and Bharathiyar

By: Kumar Punithavel

Last November I was lucky to visit with Senior Tamil Center to Mauritius a beautiful island in the Indian Ocean. The island has lovely mountains, waterfalls, lush green trees and above all great people. It has the oldest botanical garden in the southern hemisphere. At the pond in the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden we saw a Lilly with leaf about ten feet in diameter!

Near the capitol Port Louis we saw a ruined fort like structure called Aapravasi Ghat. The Immigration Depot, Aapravasi Ghat is a building complex located in Port Louis on the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius, the first British colony to receive indentured, or contracted, labour workforce from India. Between 1849 and 1923, half a million Indian indentured labourers passed through the Immigration Depot, to be transported to plantations throughout the British Empire. The large scale migration of the labourers left an indelible mark on the societies of many former British colonies, with Indians constituting a substantial portion of their nation populations. In Mauritius alone, 68 percent of the current total population is of Indian ancestry. The Immigration Depot has thus become an important reference point in the history and cultural identity of Mauritius. [

An indentured servant or indentured laborer is an employee (indenturee) within a system of non-free labour who is bound by a signed or forced contract (indenture) to work for a particular employer for a fixed time. The contract often lets the employer sell the labor of an indenturee to a third party. Indentures usually enter into an indenture for a specific payment or other benefit, or to meet a legal obligation, such as debt bondage. On completion of the contract, indentured servants were given their freedom, and occasionally a plot of land. Until the late 18th century, indentured servitude was very common in British North America. It was often a way for poor Europeans to immigrate to the American colonies: they signed an indenture in return for a costly passage. After their indenture expired, the immigrants were free to work for themselves or another employer. It has been argued by at least one economist that indentured servitude occurred largely as "an institutional response to a capital market imperfection. In many countries, systems of indentured labor have now been outlawed, and are banned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a form of slavery.

Indentured labour may sound reasonable for a casual observer. But the humiliation and exploitation they underwent was very sad and painful. The equivalent of Aapravasi we had in Ceylon is the Mandapam Camp through Indian indentured labours was brought from India to work

கரும்புத் தோட்டத்திலே - அவர்
கால்களும் கைகளும் சோர்ந்து விழும்படி
வருந்து கின்றனரே! ஹிந்து
மாதர்தம் நெஞ்சு கொதித்துக் கொதித்துமெய்
சுருங்குகின்றனரே - அவர்
துன்பத்தை நீக்க வழியில்லையோ? ஒரு
மருந்திதற் கிலையோ? - செக்கு
மாடுகள் போலுழைத் தேங்குகின்றார், அந்தக்
(கரும்புத்தோட்டத்திலே)

பெண்ணென்று சொல்லிவிடலோ - ஒரு
பேயும் இரங்கும் என்பார்; தெய்வமே - நினது
எண்ணம் இரங்காதோ? - அந்த
ஏழைகள் அங்கு சொரியும் கண்ணீர்வெறும்
மண்ணிற் கலந்திடுமோ? - தெற்கு
மாகடலுக்கு நடுவினிலே, அங்கோர்
கண்ணற்ற தீவினிலே - தனிக்
காட்டினிற் பெண்கள் புழுங்குகின்றார், அந்தக்
(கரும்புத்தோட்டத்திலே)

நாட்டை நினைப்பாரோ? - எந்த
நாளினிப் போயதைக் காண்பதென்றே அன்னை
விட்டை நினைப்பாரோ? - அவர்
விம்மி விம்மி விம்மி விம்மியழுங் குரல்
கேட்டிருப்பாய் காற்றே! துன்பக்
கேணியிலே எங்கள் பெண்கள் அழுதசொல்
மீட்டும் உரையாயோ? - அவர்
விம்மி யழவுந் திறங்கெட்டும் போயினர்
(கரும்புத்தோட்டத்திலே)

நெஞ்சம் குமுறுகிறார் - கற்பு
நீங்கிடச் செய்யும் கொடுமையிலே அந்தப்
பஞ்சை மகளிரெல்லாம் - துன்பப்
பட்டு மடிந்து மடிந்து மடிந்தொரு
தஞ்சமு மில்லாதே - அவர்
சாகும் வழக்கத்தை இந்தக் கணத்தினில்
மிஞ்ச விடலாமோ? - வேறு
வீரமா காளி சாமுண்டி காளீஸ்வரி!
(கரும்புத்தோட்டத்திலே)

In the sugar plantation- they
Struggle so hard their limbs
Aches and fall apart! Hindu
Women with throbbing hearts
Wanes off their body- isn't
There a means to dispel suffering-
There a cure for this- like
Oil-press oxen they slog on
In the Sugar plantation.

When you mention it's a woman
Even ghost do pity. Oh Lord-won't
Your heart ever pity?- those
Poor's tear drops will it
Merge into the bare soil?- within
middle of the southern sea, in the
Visionless island lonely forests
women are struggling
In the sugar plantations.

Will they think of home land? wondering
When they will get to see their
Birth home? -Their
Sobbing, sobbing, and sobbing voice you
Would have heard blowing wind! In the
Pond of sorrows our dames crying words
Won't you echo? they've even
Lost their voice to sob and cry
In the sugar plantation.

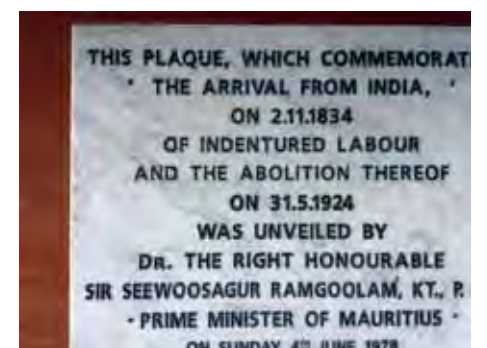
Heart wrenched - by the
Cruelty of rapes on them
Those pitiable women folks-suffer
Perish and perish without
Any protection- their
Death can it continue, in this moment
Can it exceed? Hey
Veeera Maha Kali Saamundi Kaaleeswari!
In the sugar plantation.

If he passes the test he is branded with a hot nut which was taken from burning cinders. The brandishing had been there to his death bed. My friend told me he could not stop his tears. His forefather had sacrificed so much that his progeny could have a future. It is estimated in the nineteen colonies that was under the British empire two million indentures labourers were employed.

Aapravasi Ghat is a monument of indentured labour. Seventy percent of the Mauritian people are descendants of indentured labourers. In ancient times this building was called Coolly Ghat. In 1987 the building was declared as a national monument. In 1989 it was renamed as Aapravasi Ghat.

The word Aapravasi can be divided into two Tamil words. One is Apuram and the second word as Vasi. The word Apuram in Tamil means other side or away. The word Vasi means one who dwells away or on the other side. Thus it is suited for Tamil and North Indian languages.

There are little more than 100,000 Tamils living in this country. May be we can call them as Mauritian Tamils, Canadian Tamils, British Tamils, American Tamils etc! Of these only 54,000 declared Tamil as their mother tongue at the national survey. Of these only 3650 declared



on coffee and tea plantations. A very close friend of mine who is living in Toronto, told me of an incident that happened in his life. His grandfather had come as an indentured labour from India. At his advancing age my friend saw a burnt mark on grand pa's left upper chest and casually asked him what the burnt mark was.

The elder came out with gruesome story.

When he applied as indentured labourer he is assembled into a room at Mandabam camp, and stripped all clothes, which is taken to be boiled and dried. This is to ensure no disease carried. Next he is given a through physical examination by a European gentleman.

that they speak in Tamil. Another 3300 have declared they speak Tamil mixed with another language mixed. Of the 200 junior schools half of them teach Tamil. In Port Louis a Tamil school was started in 2013 named Ilakuvanar School.

Barathiyar was a Tamil writer, poet, journalist, Indian independence activist and a social reformer from Tamil Nadu. He was popularly known as "Mahakavi Bharathiyar". He was the pioneer of modern tamil poetry and is considered one of the greatest Tamil literary figure of all time. His numerous works included fiery songs kindling patriotism during the Indian independence movement. This earned the wrath of the British rulers and was to be arrested. He went into hiding in Pondicherry from 1908 to 1918 which was under the French rule. There were large numbers of people taken as indentured labourers from Pondicherry to Mauritius as it was a French colony previously. Seeing the plight of the poor emigrants he composed the song 'Karumbuth totathinile'.



Special Feature

Gregorian calendar

Its origin and evolution

Raymond Rajabalan

Calendars have become very closely involved in our lives in some form or other. They have become a useful tool for us to remember the important religious days, keeping appointments, planning various events, scheduling holidays etc.

During ancient times men measured time based on the phases of moon and the environmental changes that result from the orbital movements of Sun. With the passage of time, due to the growth of civilization in the various communities throughout the world, a number of improved methods of measuring the time were devised, resulting in the creation of the modern day calendar.

The word calendar owes its origin to the Latin word “Kalends”, meaning a ledger or accounts book. During various stages of the history of mankind, calendars were subjected to various forms of reforms by a number of scholars and astronomers resulting in the development of the modern day Gregorian calendar. This calendar having seven day week helps us to accurately measure the time.

EVOLUTION OF GREGORIAN CALENDAR

It is generally believed that the first calendar was developed by Egyptians during 2500 B.C. Later on in 713 B.C, **Numa Pompilius**, the second king of Roman Empire promulgated a calendar reform that adjusted the solar and lunar years and included the months of January and February in the existing 10-month calendar. This reformed 12 month calendar was used as the official calendar throughout Rome



Numa Pompilius

JULIAN CALENDAR

The Julian calendar a reform of the Roman calendar was introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 BC and came into force in 45

BC. It was chosen after consultation with the astronomer Sosigenes of Alexandria. It has a regular year of 365 days divided into 12 months, and a leap day is added to February every four years. Hence the Julian year is on average 365.25 days long.



Julius Caesar

The Julian calendar remained in use into the 20th century in some countries as a national calendar, but it has generally been replaced by the modern Gregorian calendar. It is still used by the Berber people of North Africa and by many national Orthodox churches. Those Orthodox Churches that no longer use Julian calendar typically use the Revised Julian calendar rather than the Gregorian calendar.

GREGORIAN CALENDAR



POPE GREGORY XIII

The Gregorian calendar is the most widely used calendar in the world today. It is a reform of the Julian calendar, first proposed by the Calabrian doctor Aloysius Lilius, and decreed by Pope Gregory XIII, for whom it was named, on 24 February 1582 by papal decree. Years in the reformed calendar continued the numbering system of the Julian calendar, which are numbered from the traditional Incarnation year of Jesus, labeled as the “Anno Domini” (AD) era

The changes made by Pope Gregory also corrected the drift in the civil calendar which arose because the average Julian calendar year was slightly too long. The Gregorian calendar system dealt with the drawbacks in Julian calendar by dropping 10 days to bring the calendar back into synchronization with the seasons, and adopting the following leap year rule:

Every year that is exactly divisible by four is a leap year, except for years that are exactly divisible by 100; the centennial years that are exactly divisible by 400 are still leap years. For example, the year 1900 is not a leap year but the year 2000 is a leap year.

In the Julian calendar, all years exactly divisible by 4 were leap years.



DETERMINING THE LENGTH OF DAY

We measure the length of time from midnight up to the midnight of the following day as one day. But according to astronomers, an indigenous race called Umbri that lived in central Italy during the second century, defined a day as the time period from noon to the following day noon. Hebrews measured the time period from one sunset to the next sunset as a day.

Babylonians, Egyptians Chinese and Hindu priests used to measure the time between two consecutive sun rises as a day.

Thus though all the ancient communities agreed that a day included day time and night time, they differed on how to calculate the length of a day.

DEVELOPMENT OF SEVEN DAY WEEK

Jews introduced the system of measuring time by using a seven day week and it was accepted by Greeks. It is believed that this system arose because each the four phases of Moon were seven days long and Babylonians considered seven as their holy number.

In any event, a seven day week based on heavenly luminaries eventually diffused both East and West, to the Romans via the Greeks, and to the Japanese via Indians and Chinese.

Hindu civilization employed a seven-day week, mentioned in the Ramayana, a sacred epic written in Sanskrit about 500 BCE, as Bhanu-vaar meaning Sunday, Soma-vaar meaning Moon-day and so forth.

EVOLUTION OF THE NAMES OF MONTHS

The 12 months in a year have been calculated based on the growth phase of Moon. September, October, November and December were named based on the Latin numbering system. July and August were named after the Roman emperors Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar. January and June derived their names from Greek Gods Janus and Juno. March was named after Mars, the Roman God of War. February was named after the Latin term februum, which means purification, via the purification ritual Februa held on February 15 in the old Roman calendar. The derivation

of the name (Latin Aprilis) is uncertain. Since most of the Roman months were named in honor of divinities, and as April was sacred to Venus the Goddess of love, it has been suggested that Aprilis was originally her month Aphrilis, from her Greek name Aphrodite. There are no records regarding the origin of the name for the month of May.

HISTORY OF CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS IN ROMAN-GREGORIAN CALENDARS

During the region of Romulus, a year consisted of 10 months and 303 days.

In eighth century, Numa Pompilius, the second king of Roman Empire added two more months January and February and created a 12-month calendar consisting of 355 days.

After six more centuries, Julius Caesar paid a visit to Egypt and after consulting some scholars decided to introduce some changes in the existing Roman calendar.

With the advise of astronomer Sosigenes of Alexandria new calendar with 365 days was created. It was divided into 12 months, and a leap day added to February every four years.

At the same time the seventh month of the year hitherto known as Quintilis was changed as July in honour of Julius Caesar.

Augustus Caesar who ascended into power after the assassination of Julius Caesar changed the name of the eighth month from Sextilis into August in his honour. Also as per his request one day was reduced from February and added to August. As a result the number of days in February was reduced to 29 while the number for August was increased to 31 days.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GREGORIAN CALENDAR

The Gregorian Calendar is the most widely used civil calendar in the world. It is named after Pope Gregory XIII, who introduced it in October 1582.



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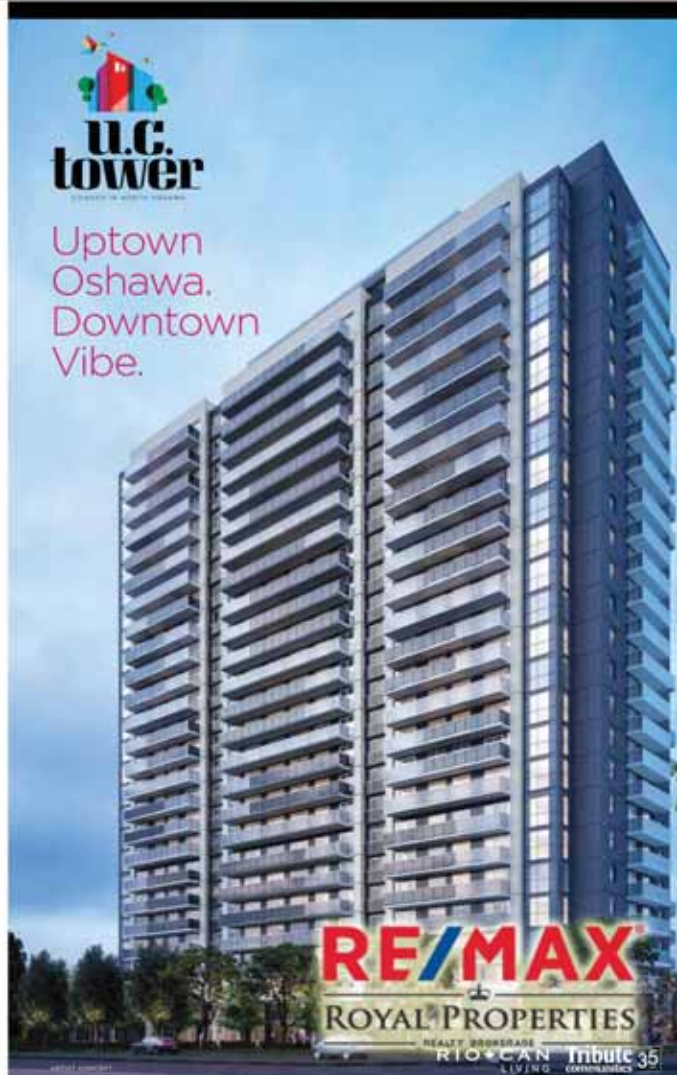
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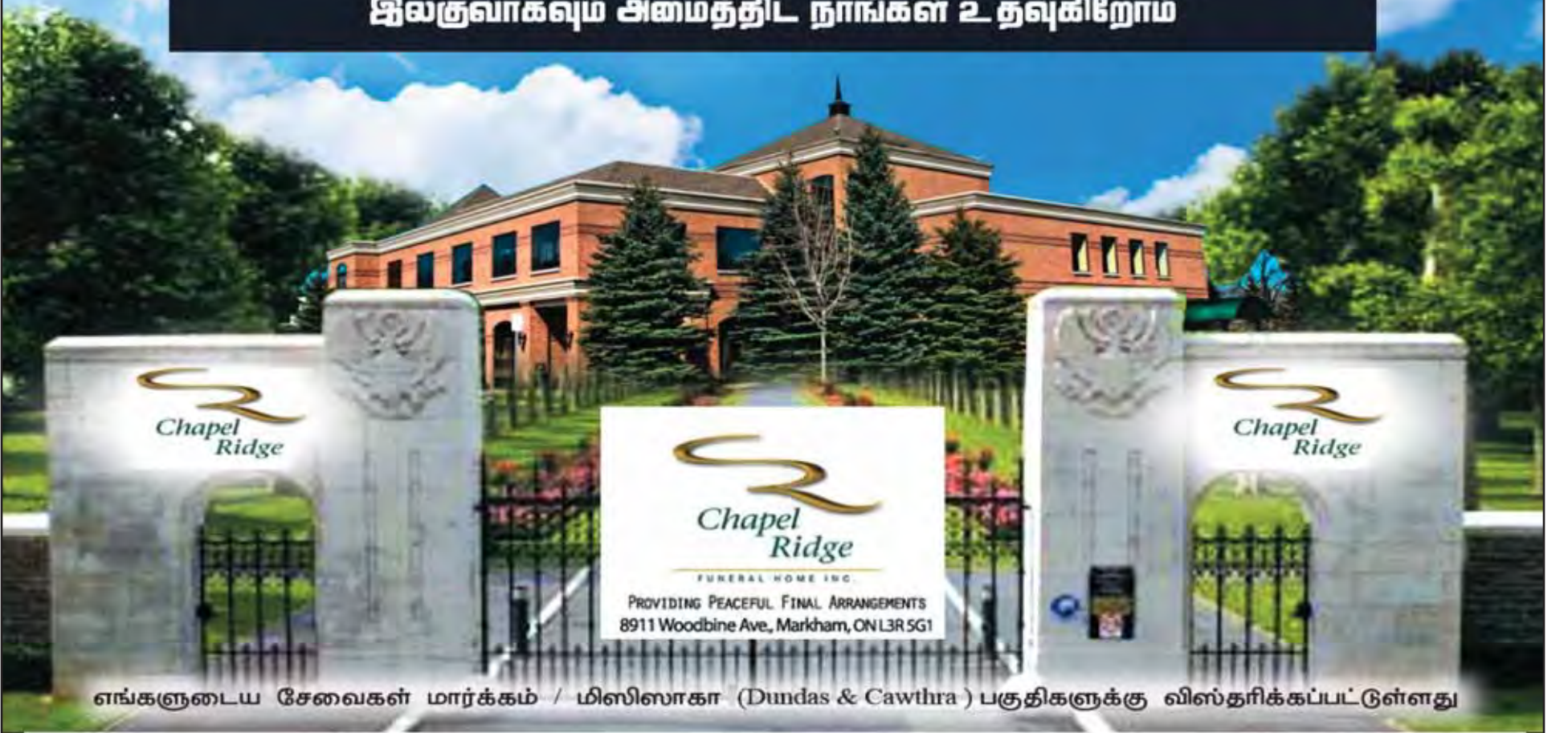
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DAWN OF THAI PAVES THE WAY FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

“Thai Piranthal Vazhi Pirakkum”

C. Kamalaharan

Once a happy and peaceful region
Is now a miserable and hostile region
A region that maintained law and order
Now a region of crime and disorder

Youths wielding sword and dagger
A sight people fear and stagger
Prowling for targets in a crime spree
Strike ruthlessly and instantly flee

Loafing along the streets gaily
Indulging in crimes so bravely
Abductions and raping are the order of the day
Besides thefts and burglaries throughout the day

Intoxicated and boisterous they go cheering
Casting obscene remarks and jeering
Shocked and panicked are passers by
Who scurry into hideouts near by

The prolonged war had ravaged the region
Massacred civilians without any reason
Vandalised heritage sites appear so tragic
And disrupted the well-knit social fabric

It had uprooted the rightful possessors
Looted their priceless possessions
Interfered in peoples' liberty
And boosted illegal activity



In education we were on top
But now it's a complete flop
Due to the administration's fault
Bringing everything to a grinding halt

Can we restore our former glory
And relieve us from sorrow so gory
Will Thai Pongal bring peace and prosperity
For us and for our posterity

‘Thai Piranthal Vazhi Prakkum’ says the adage
So things will fall in line to our advantage
Hopefully the dawn of Thai by nature
Will pave the way for a bright future





Purity in action

By: J J Aputharajah



- americanmussar.com

The support of friends and allies will lead to material prosperity but only good performance could lead to all-round success. Activities that do not result in success and attendant reputation should be carefully avoided. Those who aspire for greatness will diligently refrain from activities that jeopardize their reputation. Wise men who do not waver in their thoughts and their visions will not act in a manner detrimental to their reputation -even if they suffer hardship. It is not wise to engage in activities that will result in regrets. If there are inadvertent slips, it is better not to repeat them. Even at the embarrassing situation of leaving ones' mother starving, one should not engage in sin. Valluvar placed values on a high pedestal and declared them above all human weaknesses. The poverty of wise men is far superior to wealth acquired by unjust activities. Faultless earning and generous sharing are concepts repeatedly proclaimed by Valluvar in his immortal life-enlightening couplets. Even if forbidden actions are successfully performed at a particular point of time, they will ultimately result in difficulties. Wealth amassed in the midst of other people's tears, will go that way, causing one's own distress. On the other hand, will bring benefits even if there are initial hazards. Water cannot be retained in unbaked mud-pot, likewise, wealth acquired through wrong actions will not last.

*"Idukkad padinum irli vantha ceyaar,
Naduku atta kaadchi avar"*

(Kural: 651-660)



Valluvar's Views



SOUL STIRRING IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS SONGS



andreamaicreative.com

Jesudason John Atputharajah

Tamil religious songs- whether they are Hindu or Christian- have a soul-stirring impact on its singers or listeners. Tamil language has a pristine cultural background in addition to its profound sweetness. Hence it has a great impact and appeases the human souls in a great way. The very singing of those songs raises the spirits of the devotees and make them recipients of peace and God's love. They keep them saturated with the spirit of holiness and impels them to galvanize their faith and also be vehicles of the love of God to others. One has to go on singing to grow spiritually and become conscious of the spirit of God and his influence. The power of God and his grace make them funnels of his enormous presence and benevolence. I have listed some of the most effective ones in order to show their sweetness and magnificent appeal or impact.

A. Saivite.

1. "Katpanaienrallum-katchillaienrallumkathanneunnaimaraven."

This is a magnificent classical song which speaks out the nature of God. God is epitomized as a generous and kind person helping humans in every way. He may be idolized in stone or gold but still the belief or faith in him makes the human mind strong and resolute. "Nitpathum nadappathum un cheyalale, ninaipathum niharlvathum nin cheyalae. God determines all our activities and thoughts. The song wonderfully and eloquently expresses the

all pervading nature of God's power. This song was written by Kavignar Valee and sung by T.M.Soundararajan.

2. "Cinthanai sei maname, seithal thee vinayahanridume"

This is a song sung by T.M.Soundararajan and dwells on the advantages on thinking and meditating on God and his inestimable greatness. One could get rid of all his deficiencies and evil ways by associating with God and worshipping him. The lyric is from the film 'Ambigapathy'- asserts that meditating on God's glory enables us to get rid of all our evil thoughts and make us to keep our thoughts and deeds pure. A very remarkable lyric that remains evergreen in the minds of music lovers and devotees.

3. "Arul purivai karunaikk kadale"

This a song sung by M.L.Vasanthakumari. It beseeches the grace of God and enlists all his powers and accomplishments. It is a classical song sung with all devotion and admiration of the love of God and its marvelous impact. The song was composed by Suddhanantha Bharathy and it has an everlasting devotional appeal.

4. "Kantha unnai anri kaanen ulaginile"

This is a classical song sung by T.M. Soundararajan and it boasts about the nature of Lord Muruga and his incomparable powers of benevolence and deeds. It is a non-film individual praise song.

5. "Vel muruga, vel muruga vel"

This is devotional song which is also attuned to dancing. It is a kavadi song and its refrain adds to its appeal. It enlists the powers and mighty deeds of Lord Muruga. It was sung by Ramani ammal mainly as a Bajana song.

B. Christian

1. "Thirupp patham nambi vanthen"

This is a Christian song written by Navajothi Samson and it is based on the psalm 145. It tells of the innumerable greatness of God and the soul's desire to seek God so that he will grant refuge and strength.

2. Unnathmanavarin uyar maraivillirukk iravan"

The song is based on Psalm 91 and was sung by Elizabeth Jeryraj. It tells of the privileges available for a man who is protected by God's love and benevolence. It highlights the grace of God and its abundant blessings.

3. "Vinthai kiristu yesu rajah, unthan siluvai enmenmai"

This song was sung by V. Santiyago and it tells of the greatness of the cross. It claims that the greatness of the cross is far more valuable than all the riches and charms of the world. The tune of the song expresses the sense of appreciation and admiration for the cross in a dynamic way.

4. "Ennai marava yesu naatha, unthan thayaval

ennai nadathum"

It tells of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and how he could guide us to live a victorious life in this world of sin and shame. It adds to the confidence of a devotee when he sings-'payapadathe valakkarathale pathukappen enpathale thothirm'. The main theme of the song is seeking God for help in daily living.

5."Enakkothassai varum parvatham mel, en kankalai ereduppen"

The song is based on the psalm 121. and it tells of the advantages of looking upon the power and love of God for all our needs. It was sung by Rev. Sam Selvadurai. The main ideas of the songs are 1. I lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help 11..My help comes from God. 111.The Lord is my keeper 1V. The Lord shall preserve thee.. At times of difficulties the devotee could seek the help of God for restoration and peace of mind.

Baghthi geethas (Worship songs) provide motivation and energy for worship. When couched in sweet languages like Tamil they work like magnet to draw us and inspire us in the love of God. They make us forget earthly worries or futile thoughts and propel us into vistas of everlasting joy. Our thoughts become focused on God and nothing else. It is praise and revelry in the glories of God and the enduring peace and joy he provides instantaneously and continuously. 'Christ is my way my goal, I have chosen him as my all, what a joy it's to praise him, to love him, to serve him; I am a child, child, child of His love.'

RG Education Centers Hosts ANNUAL STUDENT EVENT



TDSB Trustee, Yalini Rajakulasingam



Rayhan Osazin
Intermediate 1st winner receives prize



Renoshaa Siyopan Junior
1st winner receives prize



Abisha Amalan



Group photo



Abishaa Selvakumar



Jaylen Victor

On Saturday, December 8, 2018, RG Education Centers hosted its annual student event. This year, they held a Speech Arts Competition where students from Grades 1 to 12 had an opportunity to practise their public speaking skills in front of a familiar audience. Mr. Selvaratnam, principal of RG Education Centers, began the event with a few words of encouragement, and the rest of the event was led by student MC, AnanthSatkunarajah. Participating students spoke about diverse subjects, ranging from simple topics such as who is your hero, to greater issues such as gun violence.

Student speeches were judged by two senior teachers at RG Education Centers – Dr. S. Krishnapillai, senior English, math, science teacher and biology specialist; and Ms. Hellen Gonichie, senior English teacher. Both judges donated their time on the weekend to support the students, and they were not disappointed by the remarkable speeches given by the students.

Among the audience was the Guest of Honour, Ms. Yalini Rajakulasingam – TDSB Trustee of North Scarborough. Ms. Yalini Rajakulasingam was very impressed by all the student speeches. She presented the awards to the winners of the competition, and spoke to the audience about the importance of education as well as highlighted the importance of student voice.

Winner of the Junior Division, Renoshaa Siyopan (Grade 3), gave an endearing speech about why she wanted a dog. She exclaimed that not only would a dog make a good companion, but it could also protect her family. The audience learned many things from the well-spoken, young girl.

Winner of the Intermediate Division, Rayhan Osazin (Grade 5), gave a powerful speech about the importance of respect and responsibility. Rayhan stated that it is only through these two things that we can become proud citizens of the world. Rayhan gave her speech with the utmost confidence and fluency, earning her first place in her category.

Nickisha Victor and Hajar Osazin, were also awarded for their exemplary performance in the Senior Division. Nickisha Victor pleaded for greater law enforcement on guns due to the rising number of incidents and deaths involving the use of the weapon. Hajar Osazin gave an entrancing speech on how to stand up to bullies, and how to find inner confidence and promote self-love in order to deter bullies.

Every year, RG Education Centers hosts a student event to provide a platform for student voice, whether it be through speaking or writing. These opportunities allow students to not only apply the skills they learn in school and in tutorial to more enjoyable exercises, but it helps them to build confidence in expressing their creativity and insights. Every student who participates is always recognized for their hard work and efforts. Even for the students who do not rank in the competitions, they still leave with a sense of pride in their work.



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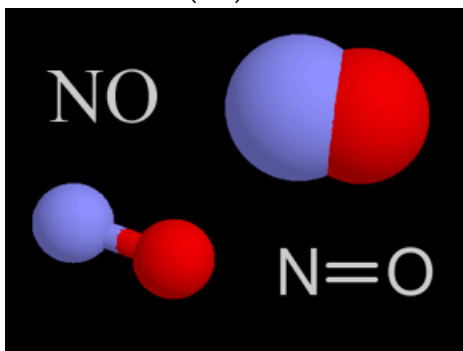
New Year and Science Will Bring You Joy and Laughter at Every Turn

By: **Uthayan Thurairajah**

The use of Low Levels (visible near infrared) Light Therapy (LLLT) has been known for almost forty years since the discovery of lasers. LLLT is used for reducing inflammation, pain, edema, healing of wounds, preventing tissue and nerves damages. Despite many reports of positive findings from experiments including randomized controlled clinical trials, LLLT remains debatable. Firstly, the biochemical mechanisms underlying the positive effects are incompletely understood, and secondly, the complexity of choosing amongst a large number of illumination parameters has led to the publication of some negative studies as well as many positive ones.

This review will focus on the role of nitric oxide in the cellular and tissue effects of LLLT and the happy hormones. Near-IR light is primarily absorbed by cytochrome c oxidase (photo acceptor). Nitric oxide produced in the mitochondria can inhibit respiration by binding to cytochrome c oxidase and competitively displacing oxygen, especially in stressed. If light absorption relocated the nitric oxide and thus allowed the cytochrome c oxidase to recover and cellular respiration to resume, this would explain many of the observations made in LLLT. Science begins to recognize joy as a potential element of salutogenesis. We can examine the neurobiological factors underlying pleasure sensations. The pleasure is described as a state of happiness and satisfaction and the related hormones in the body.

Nitric Oxide (NO)

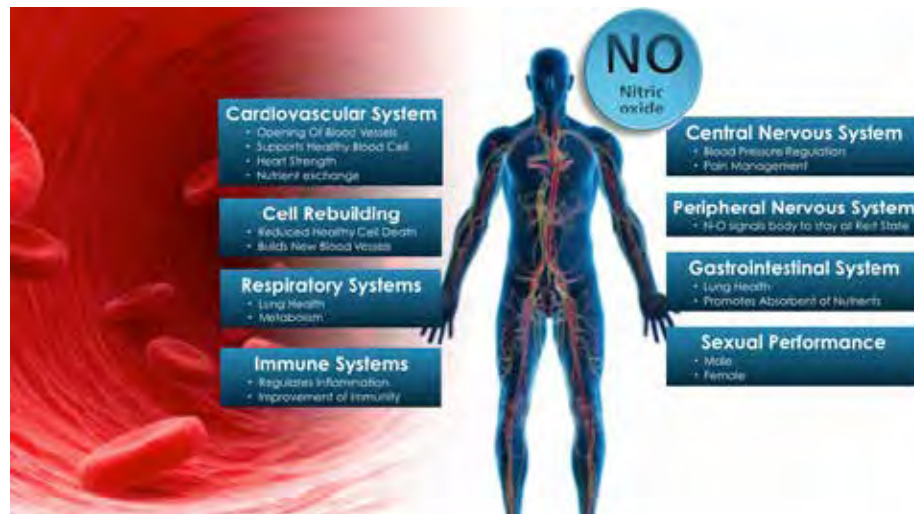


Nitric oxide (NO) is a free radical gas and an endogenous vasodilator. It is a neurotransmitter and a potent regulator of circulation. NO helps in the processing of nerve signals as they cross synapses. L-arginine is one of 20 amino acids that make up proteins, is the only amino acid that generates significant amounts of NO. In 1998, three Americans were awarded the Nobel Prize for discovering NO and explaining its role in human health. The most notable offerings lay in describing the effect of NO on the circulation. The nerve responses and the blood flow are prompt. Little increases in NO lead to both vasodilation and better sensory perception. NO metabolism is required for normal circulation (venous, arterial, and lymph flows) and for the ability to sense pain, temperature, and pressure.

Mitochondria&Photo acceptors

Mitochondria are distinct organelles with two membranes and are usually rod-shaped. Mitochondria is a "cellular power plants," and it converts food molecules into energy in the form of ATP. A typical cell contains about 2,000 mitochondria, which occupy roughly one-fifth of the area. Mitochondria contain DNA that is circular and lies in the matrix in punctate structures called "nucleoids" each containing 4-5 copies of the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA). Mitochondria have their ribosomes and can make many of their proteins. The outer membrane limits the organelle, while the inner membrane is thrown into folds or shelves that project inward called "cristae mitochondrial".

An outstanding role for the mitochondria is the production of ATP as reflected by a large number of proteins in the inner membrane needed for this task. In addition to the role in producing cellular energy in the form of ATP, mitochondria play an essential role in many other metabolic tasks, such as apoptosis (programmed cell death), cellular proliferation, regulation of the cellular redox state, glutamate-mediated excitotoxic neuronal injury, heme synthesis, and steroid synthesis.



NO in mitochondria

It was believed that cells often use NO to block respiration. NO is emitted by nerve endings and can act on an enzyme called guanylate cyclase to relax blood vessels. Several groups reported that mitochondria contained a particular isoform of nitric oxide synthase. This mitochondrial NO was identified as the neuronal isoform. Moncada proposed that evolution crafted cytochrome oxidase to bind not only oxygen but also NO. One effect of reducing respiration in some locations would be to divert oxygen elsewhere in cells and tissues. It prevents oxygen levels sinking dangerously low. NO blocks respiration in the cells lining blood vessels and that this helps to transfer oxygen into smooth muscle cells in these vessels.

The Messenger Molecule



NO and Photo acceptor

Mitochondria under the control of NO may also be connected in the attenuation of adaptive responses to low O₂. NO promotes mitochondrial biogenesis independent of Photo acceptor but involves activation of the soluble guanylate cyclase.

Extreme production of NO and mitochondrial dysfunction have for many years been freely associated with pathophysiological mechanisms. NO inhibits mitochondrial respiration. It may depend on the biochemical actions of NO on mitochondria, their



signaling consequences, and their possible relationship to cellular homeostasis and pathophysiology.

Low Level Light Therapy (LLLT)

LLLT has been widely practiced for over forty years; it still has not reached accep-

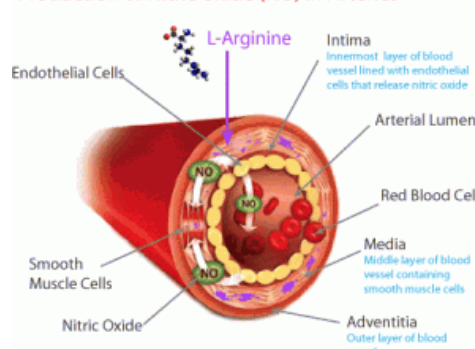
tance by mainstream medicine. The lack of recognition is likely to be the inability of most practitioners of LLLT to adequately describe how it works on an atomic, cellular and tissue level. There is a need for more research on identifying photo acceptor molecules, explaining cell and signaling pathways that are engaged after cells absorb visible photons. It is necessary to investigate relationships between the optical parameters of the light such as wavelength; total delivered energy and the rate, coherence, polarization state and pulse structure.

Nitric oxide and LLLT.

The LLLT might work by photo dissociating NO from the cytochrome c oxidase, thereby reversing the signaling consequences of excessive NO binding. Light can indeed change the inhibition caused by NO binding to cytochrome oxidase, both in isolated mitochondria and in whole cells. Light can shield cells against NO-induced cell death — the experiments used with wavelengths from 600 to 630 nm. NIR appears to have effects on cytochrome oxidase in conditions where NO is unlikely to be present.

Light-mediated vasodilation was first described in 1968 by R F Furchgott, in his nitric oxide research that leads to a Nobel Prize in 1998. The studies by other researchers confirmed Furchgott's early

Production of Nitric Oxide (NO) in Arteries



work and demonstrated the ability of light to change the release of NO and stimulate vasodilation through the effect NO. This finding suggests that adequately designed illumination devices may be useful. The wavelengths are most active on this light-mediated release of NO are different from those used in LLLT being in the UVA and blue range.

Effects of LLLT

Many published papers describe increased blood flow during and after LLLT treatments both in animal models and in patients. Blue light at 441-nm seems to be best for dissociating NO from hemoglobin, UVA light at 366-nm appears to be best for separating NO from blood vessel walls, and red or NIR light seems to be best for dissociating NO from cytochrome c oxidase.

Nitric Oxide and happy hormones

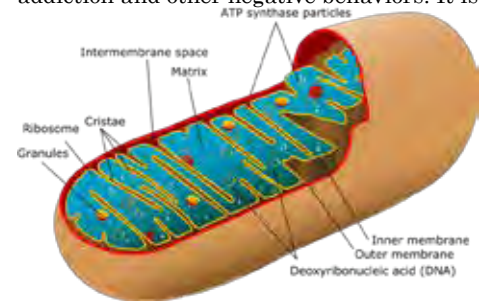
Nitric oxide (NO) is an alternative transmitter particle in the nervous system, which

is manufactured from L-arginine by Nitric Oxide Synthase (NOS). NO has multiple possible targets, among which the soluble guanylate cyclase (GC) is the most widely characterized. NO changes the extracellular levels of various neurotransmitters in the central nervous system, (e.g., serotonin (5-HT), dopamine (DA), γ-aminobutyric acid (GABA), and glutamate). Also, NO can inactivate the limiting enzyme in the synthesis of 5-HT, tryptophan hydroxylase and has been suggested to stimulate synaptic vesicle release from hippocampal synaptosomes.

NO may interact with the serotonergic and dopaminergic neurotransmission by crushing the overflow of 5-HT & DA in the hippocampus. Further characterization of NO's actions in the hippocampus could have many neurobiological implications, in light of the alleged role of NOergic and serotonergic mechanisms in anxiety and depression.

Neurobiology of happiness

Science begins to recognize joy as a potential element of salutogenesis. The pleasure is described as a state of happiness and satisfaction. The adverse impacts of joy, we can focus on motivational toxicity and addiction. Pleasure can serve productivity, cognition, and health, but simultaneously promotes addiction and other negative behaviors. It is



a complicated neurobiological phenomenon, relying on reward circuitry or limbic activity. These processes involve dopaminergic signaling.

The endorphin and endogenous mechanisms may play a role. Natural rewarding activities are necessary for survival, normal biological behaviors like eating, lovemaking, and reproduction. Social and cultural contacts can further facilitate the positive effects of pleasurable experiences. However, artificial stimulants can be harmful.

Addictive drugs can directly act on reward pathways. The outcome of pleasant experiences may be a question of dose. Moderate pleasurable experiences can improve biological flexibility and health. Pleasure can be a defense source or may work salutogenesis. Real rewards are reconciled by sensitive organ stimulation by showing a potential connection with complementary medical methods. Belief and trust can be part of a self-healing potential connected with rewarding incentives.

Further, the dummyresponse physiologically resembles pleasure phenomena, since both involve brain's reward circuitry stimulation and subjective feelings of well-being. Pleasurable pursuits may help to influence healthy behavioral changes, including stress management. Further research is required to fully understand the nature, neurobiology and maybe dangerous aspects of pleasure. Also, the possible involvement of endogenous signaling has to be studied further.



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

The cost of missing the RRSP deadline



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

Yes, it's true that investments held within a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) is the best tax-deferred, income-building way for most Canadians to save for retirement. It is similarly true that missing the RRSP deadline for making your maximum 2018 contribution can be very costly. If you are in a high income bracket this year but will have a lower marginal tax rate in a future year, your tax benefit from that future RRSP contribution will also be lower. The additional tax refund you didn't get because you didn't contribute this year is not available to make investments or pay down non-deductible debt. On the other hand, if you do make your max RRSP contribution and do get an additional refund, you should consider investments appropriate to your diversification requirements and tolerance for risk, rather than depositing your refund into a savings account. If you are claiming a spousal RRSP deduction for a deceased spouse or common law partner, the contribution to the spousal RRSP must be made in the year of death or during the first sixty days after the end of that year or the opportunity for this deduction will be lost.

The RRSP contributions deadline is coming up fast. And while you may have every good intention of matching or increasing your contribution from last year-it can be difficult and stressful to come up with a significant amount of cash in short order. I can show you a number of strategies to consider that can help accelerate your plan using assets you have readily available and

key tax planning benefits.

It may be to your benefit to move money you currently have in savings accounts or other investments into your RRSP sooner than later. Moving these dollars into your RRSP will not only result in a reduction of your annual tax bill-but it also allows you to maximize growth inside your RRSP.

You can also withdraw from a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) to make your RRSP contribution. Any withdrawals from your TFSA are Tax-free and are added to the available TFSA contribution room the following year. The tax refund can be used as TFSA contribution the following year.

A Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) program is a great strategy for getting the maximum amount of money into your RRSP eligible investments. When you PAC, you are simply setting up a regular payment plan-usually an automatic withdrawal from your bank account-in an amount you can afford. A regular PAC becomes part of your budget as a monthly cash outflow that you probably won't miss and removes the temptation to spend those available dollars for personal consumption.

In many cases, borrowing to take full advantage of RRSP contribution room makes sense. Maximizing your RRSP contribution now offers immediate tax savings this year and tax-deferred potential growth for many years to come. This strategy works best when the interest rate is low enough and you repay the loan as quickly as possible, preferably in one year or two at the most.



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Preparing for retirement should start early with a savings strategy that will make it possible for you to accumulate the most wealth for use (and enjoyment!) through all your retirement years. The best retirement savings strategy for most Canadians is a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) because your contributions and all the income that accumulates in your plan are tax deferred until you start using that money in retirement. Add in the fact that your contributions can be used to reduce taxes and the magic of compounding that enhances RRSP growth over time, and it's easy to see why a registered plan makes such good financial sense. When retirement time rolls around, your RRSP may be a significant source of your retirement income.

Young people who are starting a career and working toward major financial goals such as paying off student debt or buying a home often put contributing to an RRSP on the backburner in the hope that they'll be able to catch up later. The truth is a small amount invested earlier in your life has a greater financial impact than more

money invested later on.

Year after year, many Canadians leave a key financial opportunity on the table by not contributing the maximum allowable amount into their RRSP. People come up with many excuses for not contributing an RRSP. Often we hear comment that "What is the point of putting money into RRSP if when you take the money out you have to pay tax on it?" When you contribute to RRSP, you get a tax deduction and for many of you, you receive a tax refund. If you did something constructive with the tax refund like paying down debts, then the fact that you have to pay tax on your RRSP withdrawals becomes irrelevant. By having the benefit of deferring that tax, you end up with significant more money in your retirement savings.

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for a prosperous New Year and Happy Thai Pongal



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peace and joy of
the holiday season.



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St. Bridget's Convent PPA, Ontario celebrates Christmas 2018 at Grand Cinnamon Banquet & Convention Centre

St. Bridget's Convent Past Pupils Association, Ontario celebrated the annual Christmas event at the Grand Cinnamon Banquet & Convention Centre recently with a hall full attendance.

The night was filled with music, singing of religious hymns, the school song and arrival of Santa with gift ga-

lore. The committee expressed their gratitude to the sponsors for making the event a success and thanked the guests for their attendance.

A sumptuous dinner with a variety of dishes was provided by Grand Cinnamon Banquet & Convention Centre.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)



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SRI LANKAN ACCOUNTANTS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA (SAAC) CHARTERED GALA 2018



Executive Committee

Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada celebrated its 16th annual dinner dance on Saturday December 15, 2018 at the Scarborough Convention Centre in Scarborough with a packed audience of around 375 guests.



President Shobana Rajah



Secretary Ari A Ariaran



Vice President Nava Rajkumar and Muraly Srinarayanathas, supporter of SAAC



Julian A Emmanuel, Partner at Kanish & Partners LLP at left, a sponsor for SAAC



RBC Branch Manager Mohan Sundaramohan is being recognized by President Shobana Rajah for the sponsor support by RBC to SAAC



Siva Shanmuganathan from Homelife Future is being recognized by Vice President Mayooraan Thuraiarajah for his support to SAAC



Thana Yoganathan from Homelife Landmark is being recognized by Vice President Mayuran Tharmapalan for his support to SAAC



Dance Performance



WHO WAS THE THIEF ?

by *Thuraiyuran*

It was a moonless night. Pitch darkness engulfed the whole area. Except the screeching of some crickets in some corner, there was absolute silence all over. People in our area go to bed around 8.30 or 9 pm, since there was no electricity those days in Jaffna district.. Those days males slept on the verandah on wooden beds with mat and thick sheets spread on it. My father was sleeping on one and I was sleeping at a short distance away from him. This is the normal scene in most of the houses during summer months to get fresh air.

It may be about 10 pm. Suddenly, I heard the loud cry of "Thief, thief, catch him, catch him". My father would have heard that too, got up immediately and took the hurricane lamp hanging on a hook near us and proceeded towards our gate facing the road. I heard the footsteps of a person running towards the road from a lane in front of our gate, on the opposite side of the road and another person chasing him. I am sure my father would have seen the person in front, who came up to the road turned right and started running away from our house. The person who chased him while shouting, could not keep pace with him and stopped after a while. Father came back silently. I asked him why he did not go to help the person who was chasing the thief. He told me that the thief is a local man and told me to mind my own business and go to bed. I was wondering as to what happened and silently went to bed. The next day I was busy getting ready to school as usual.

My mother used to get up around 5 am and after her morning ablutions made tea for every one and went about preparing lunch for us to take it to school. Mornings we have bread and butter or Jam. Butter and jam was imported from Britain, as we were under the British rule at that time. Most of the household things, vehicles, school books etc, were imported from there or made in Colombo by companies owned by Englishmen. These food stuffs were very tasty and were of high standard. Likewise all vehicles (Austin Cars), bicycles (Raleigh), sewing machines (Singer) to name a few, were very durable and sturdy and lasted for generations. I am sure some of these items are still available with some people living in Jaffna.

Those days we never had any lunch boxes and my mother used to pack our lunch on banana leaf slightly warmed, on the flame of the kitchen fire, to make it pliable. Then the lunch, usually string hoppers or Puttu with potato curry is placed on it and neatly wrapped by thick brown paper. In the class there was a cupboard to keep the lunches of all the students who had lunch at school. We wrote our name on the lunch parcel, so that it never got mixed up. St. John's College, where I studied was a boys school and it was a well-known college for producing good results at public exams. As such getting admission was very difficult, since you have to sit for a written exam and must score good marks. The medium of instruction was English and students coming from pri-

mary schools where the medium was Tamil, found it difficult to get admission. I had extra classes in English before seeking admission and was lucky in getting in. The school started daily, except week ends, at 8.30 am and closed at 3.30 pm with a lunch break of 45 minutes.

I came back from school around 4pm had tea and snacks and went to play soft ball cricket at the grounds adjoining the Vinayagar temple near our house. Many of my friends living around it also joined as usual and were playing cricket. Just before the batting team took up fielding, we had a small break. One of my colleagues asked me as to what happened the previous night in the house opposite my house. I told him what had happened as far as I knew. He said that the old man living in that house was sleeping near the entrance of the house, was trampled by the thief and hence he got up and chased him. This was news to me.

In that house an old lady, the mother of the owner of the house, lived with her daughter in law and two children, while her son had a shop in a faraway place. He visited his family monthly or sometimes after two months. The old man, Nagar Amman was brought by the owner Suppiah, from the place he had shop called Poonakary. Nagar had no family or close relations, so he was prepared to live at Suppiah's house. He helped the household by chopping firewood, drawing water from the well, grocery shopping and other minor chores. He was more or less the guardian of the

house, as he was the only male living there. He also went to the other houses in the neighborhood doing the chores mentioned already and earned money, for his expenses as he was fed by the family. Usually the family which employed him for the day gave him lunch with cash. He earned around three rupees a day and was living a happy life. He could not read or write but was honest and trustworthy, hence everyone in that area employed him, whenever the need arose.

The old lady of the house had diabetes and their family doctor who was treating her, arranged the dispenser, who was working in his pharmacy, to go to the house and give her injection daily. Since he was living not far from their house, came there daily to inject the old lady. He was not seen for nearly three days after the incident (the day thief was chased away). So the old day had to be taken to the doctor's clinic by my father in his car.

We were about to wind up our game of cricket and I saw the woman living near the grounds, coming in search of her lamb. The boy who gave me the details of the incident asked her whether she had any knowledge of the thief, who came that night to Suppiah's house. She casually said that there is a talk that the dispenser who was giving injection to the old lady, may have gone there to give injection to Suppiah's wife also. We could not understand it, but the grown up boys started laughing.



Community members of Urumpirai, a village in Northern Sri Lanka held their Grand Annual gathering successfully in Toronto

On December 22nd 2018 people from Urumpirai gathered at the Metropolitan Center in Scarborough to celebrate "Oorum Uravum", an evening to mingle, dance, and have fun.

The night started off with a sentimental moment after lighting of the lamp. The feeling of motherland was brought inside the hall with a sacred bag of Urumpirai soil for attendees to touch and bring back

memories. This moment was followed by eloquent dances, beautiful singings, powerful speeches and honourable awards.

Awards were given to community members from Urumpirai who showed great levels of contribution and achievement in Urumpirai's past and present. The three recipients for this prestigious "The Community Champion Award" were presented to Mrs.

Meenambikai Thavaratnam, Mr. Vigneswararajah Thurajappah and Mrs. Saradha Perairavan.

The night was concluded with a visit from Santa Claus and gifts to all children, great entertainment by Robo and dancing. A wonderful night, filled with many new and old memories.

Photo Courtesy: Ekuruvi



Compiled by *Kidambi Raj*

ARUDRA DARSANAM

Sunday, December 23, 2018

When is Arudra Darsanam Celebrated:



ArudraDarsanam is observed in the Tamil month of Margazhi (December – January). It is essentially a Saivite festival and celebrates the cosmic dance of Lord Shiva, which is represented by the Nataraja form. Arudhra signifies the golden red flame and Siva performs the dance in the form this red-flamed light. This year it was celebrated on Jan. 11th. This is called Ar(u)dra Darshan. The grace of this dance symbolizes the five divine acts – creation, sustenance, dissolution, concealment and bestowal of grace. In this a deep understanding of the universe is hidden. The Cosmic Dance is called Ananda Thandavam or Dance of Bliss. This is of special significance in Shiva temples when thousands of devotee's worship Nataraja early in the morning on the full moon day of the month of Margazhi.

Significance of Arudra Darsanam:

The cosmic dance of Lord Shiva represents five activities – Creation, Protection, Destruction, Embodiment and Release. In essence, it represents

the continuous cycle of creation and destruction. This cosmic dance takes place in every particle and is the source of all energy. Arudhra Darsanam celebrates this ecstatic dance of Lord Shiva.

Legends associated with Arudra Darsanam:

According to one legend, Tiruvathirai is considered the birth star of Lord Shiva. Some call it the day when Lord Shiva merged all nine divine powers within him, before initiating the divine function of creation. Few others believe that it is on the day of Tiruvathirai that Lord Shiva returned back to this world, ending the harsh austerities and tapas that he underwent after the death of Goddess Sati.

According to another myth, Goddess Parvathi is said to have performed rigorous penance to win the heart of Lord Siva. Having moved by her devotion and love, the lord is believed to have accepted her as his divine consort on the day of Tiruvathirai. Thus few people celebrate it as the wedding day of God Shiva and Goddess Parvathi Devi.

Kamadeva, who according to Hindu mythology is considered the God of love, was reborn on this day, after being pardoned by Lord Shiva, on the request of Parvathi Devi and Rathi Devi. Kamadeva is believed to have been burnt by the destructive flames of the Lord's third eye, turning him into mere ashes.

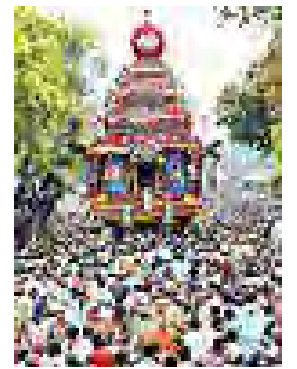
Various myths have been associated towards the celebration of the Tiruvathirai festival. Be it for any of the above reason, Tiruvathirai surely stands as a sacred and revered day for the devotees of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvathi, who seek their divine blessings by observing the sacred Tiruvathirai vratham (fast). Women fast on this holy day in the belief that it ensures long life to their husbands, thereby bringing about immense happiness and

prosperity to their family as a whole.

Lord Shiva represents the complete cyclic process of generation, destruction and regeneration. Shiva represents stillness in the form of Dakshinamurthy. The same Shiva is also known by the popular name, Nataraja the Lord of the Cosmic Dance. It is said that it was from his dance that the science of language was born. The small drum in His hand is the symbol of rhythm and sound. There is rhythm in the whole movement of the universe. The sound is the divine music that comes from the Supreme Deity and carries the revelations of the ultimate truth.

The Cosmic Dance is called Ananda Thandavam or Dance of Bliss. This is of special significance in Shiva temples when thousands of devotee's worship Nataraja early in the morning on the full moon day of the month of Margazhi. This is called Ar(u)dra Darshan. The grace of this dance symbolizes the five divine acts – creation, sustenance, dissolution, concealment and bestowal of grace. In this a deep understanding of the universe is hidden.

Although the shrines for Lord Nataraja is there in every Saivite temples, Five of those are considered to be *Pancha Sabhais* or Five Cosmic Dance Halls of Lord Siva. The five dance halls are The Hall of Gold – *Kanakasabhai* at Chidambaram, The hall of Silver – *Velli Sabhai* at Madurai, The Hall of Rubies – *Ratnasabhai* at Thiruvankudi, The Hall of Copper – *Tamrasabhai* at Tirunelveli and The Hall of Pictures – *Chitra Sabhai* at Kutralam, all in Tamil Nadu, India.



VISIT TO TEMPLE BY TWO MEMBERS OF UNITAR & YORK REGION POLICE

Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018



The York Region Police (YRP) under the leadership of Chief Eric Jolliffe, set up the Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Bureau, which is led by Superintendent Ricky Veerappan. For over a decade, as part of their work they have been bringing certain number of Police Officers and civilians of multi-ethnic origin working at various Police Stations, to Our Temple and other places of worship in York Region. When they visit our temple, they were not only taken on a tour of the temple, but were also given a very short presentation (talk) about the very basics of Hinduism and

explaining some of the misconceptions that non-Hindus have about Hindus and Hinduism. I understand that York Region Police is one of very few Police groups in the Province, undertaking place of worship tours towards the promotion of diversity and equity. It seems these initiatives undertaken by YRP was noticed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. UNITAR is a principal training arm of the United Nations and it seems that they were interested in a collaborative work between York Region and York Region Police to help integration of newcomers while also building a community that is safe welcoming and inclusive.

On December 13, 2018, our Ganesha Temple hosted a visit by the delegation from UNITAR (United Nations Institute for Training and Research), accompanied by the team from York Region Police. The UN team was represented by Ms. Estrella Merlos, Associate Director, Global Network, Social Development Programme based in Geneva, Switzerland. The York Region Police team was led by Superintendent Ricky Veerappan. The guest were given a tour of the temple facilities and they also participated in a brief religious prayer. They were exhilarated to see



the architecture and construction of the towers, sculptures and also to hear the science and history behind these designs. The apt comment by the guest, that the Temple and culture reflected the nature of the country being a melting pot of myriad of different backgrounds, essentially condenses the mood of the visit.

Superintendent Ricky Veerappan

presented a Plaque to the Temple on behalf of the York Region Police, in appreciation of the co-operation and rapport extended to YRP over the years.

The pictures show the visitors from UNITAR, with Supdt. Ricky Veerappan of YRP and temple devotees and a Priest.



Durham Tamil Association's (DTA) 17th Annual Christmas Party

The Durham Tamil Association's 17th Annual Christmas party was held on December 08th at the East shore community centre in Pickering. Over 350 parents and their children participated in the festivities.

The evening started off with a children's arts and crafts activity that depicted the Christmas themes, fol-

lowed by Christmas carols organized by DTA's youth volunteers. It was a heartwarming sight to see all kids & youth singing together displaying their holiday spirit!!

The highlight of the evening was the arrival of Santa Claus who brought a load of presents and every child at the event received a gift. They were even

able to grab a nice photo with Santa!!

It was great to see all the parents having a good time with their children and spending quality time enjoying the festive mood. Plenty of food and drinks were served to the guests throughout the evening. DTA thanked those who gave support to host this event free of charge for our valued members with

only a minimum charge of \$5 per kid as an entrance fee.

Everyone who attended this event had a great time with lots of laughter and great conversations. DTA conveyed its special thanks to the executive committee, sub committee and volunteers who put on a great show and wished everyone a Happy New Year!



Tamil Cultural & Academic Society of Durham



Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham celebrates 10th Annual Christmas Gathering

Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham celebrated its 10th annual Christmas Gathering, on Dec 22nd 2018 at Deer Greek Banquet Hall, Pickering.

The children had great fun participating in games, crafts, dancing, and snacks. Santa's presence brought the children joy and cheer. The coordinator, Anushalini Atputharasa, did an excellent job gathering children and parents. The gathering was another added memorable event to their journey with TCASD.

On the same evening TCASD celebrated Christmas with karaoke singing which was the first attempt in the Tamil community in Durham. Guests and members enjoyed singing karaoke and danced to the music. TCASD thanked Karaoke Tamil World Babu and D J Baskaran for making the evening extra musical. The event was a memorable for TCASD family. TCASD celebrated its 10th anniversary with a

massive cake and delicious dinner.

TCASD thanks the executive committee members and guests for making this day possible and a memorable event for everyone. (Seen here are some pictures taken at the event)





WATERLOO TAMIL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION, KEEPS SANTA BUSY



Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region celebrated its annual Christmas celebration on the 15th of December at the Christ Lutheran Church Hall in Waterloo. A large number of members and their family attended the event. Canadian Minister Hon. Bardish Chagger, MP Harold Albrecht and City Councillors were present.

Addressing the gathering, the President Mr. Ragu Sivaramakrishnan emphasized the role of the association as a catalyst that unites the cultural, social and religious diversity among the Tamil community in the Waterloo region and City of Guelph. He further stated 2019 will be a mile stone when the association will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. In coincide with the celebration Waterloo Region's Diversity Awards Gala 2019 will be organized on Saturday May 04 at Holiday Inn in Kitchener. It will be awards presentation and Dinner. He also invited everyone for Thai Pongal celebrations on the 20th of January in Waterloo.

Mr. Dennis Loyola, the Secretary of the association, welcomed the guests. The event included Music, games and Musical presentation by Grand River Melodies. The event ended up with dinner and arrival of Santa Claus. Lots of gifts were arranged by the association for local community children.



Awards & Winter Gala 2018 by RE/MAX Community Realty

RE/MAX Community Realty hosted their 6th Annual Awards & Winter Gala on Friday, Dec 14, 2018 at Scarborough Convention Centre. Attended by 400 guests, the event was a mega success. The entire turnout enjoyed the fine feast of food and fellowship ahead of the holidays. Almost 100 team members were recognized with mementos awards and they were presented by distinguished VIPs in attendance. Only a small number of memorable moments captured at the event can be seen here due to limited space. **Photos are courtesy of Vision-Media Lucky Exclusive & EKuruvi. More photos are available on relevant social platforms.**



Gary Anandasangaree, MP for Scarborough-Rouge Park & Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism



Jeanette Gallagher, Sales Manager-TD Canada Trust Mortgages



Guy Bonnell, Vice President, Community Development at Scarborough Health Network Foundation



Rajeef Koneswaran, Broker/Manager, RE/MAX Community Realty Inc.



Logan Velumailum, Broker of Record, RE/MAX Community Realty Inc.



Dr. Shiyam Loganathan, Internist, Coburg & Campbellford Hospital with Presentation of Year in Review



Keethan Selvarajah, Inhouse IT Expert, RE/MAX Community Realty Inc. with presentation of 2019 Leads Generation Plans



MC Sudhershini at the event



Audio/Video Presentation control by Sayon Balasuntharam with Presentation2Go staff



\$10,000 Cheque presentation to Scarborough Health Network Foundation by RE/MAX Community Team, L-R: Logan Velumailum, Krishni Narine, Jenny Tajpaul, Saudia Rafeek, Guy Bonnell, Pirasha Vykunthavasan, Rajeef Koneswaran & Gary Anandasangaree



Top Producer Award presented to Ammad Alam by Sultha Kunam, Kuber Mortgage Investment Corporation



Most Outstanding Agent of the Year Award presented to Mark Louie Antazo by Sultha Kunam, Kuber Mortgage Investment Corporation

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Happy New Year!

2019

We wish all our clients a
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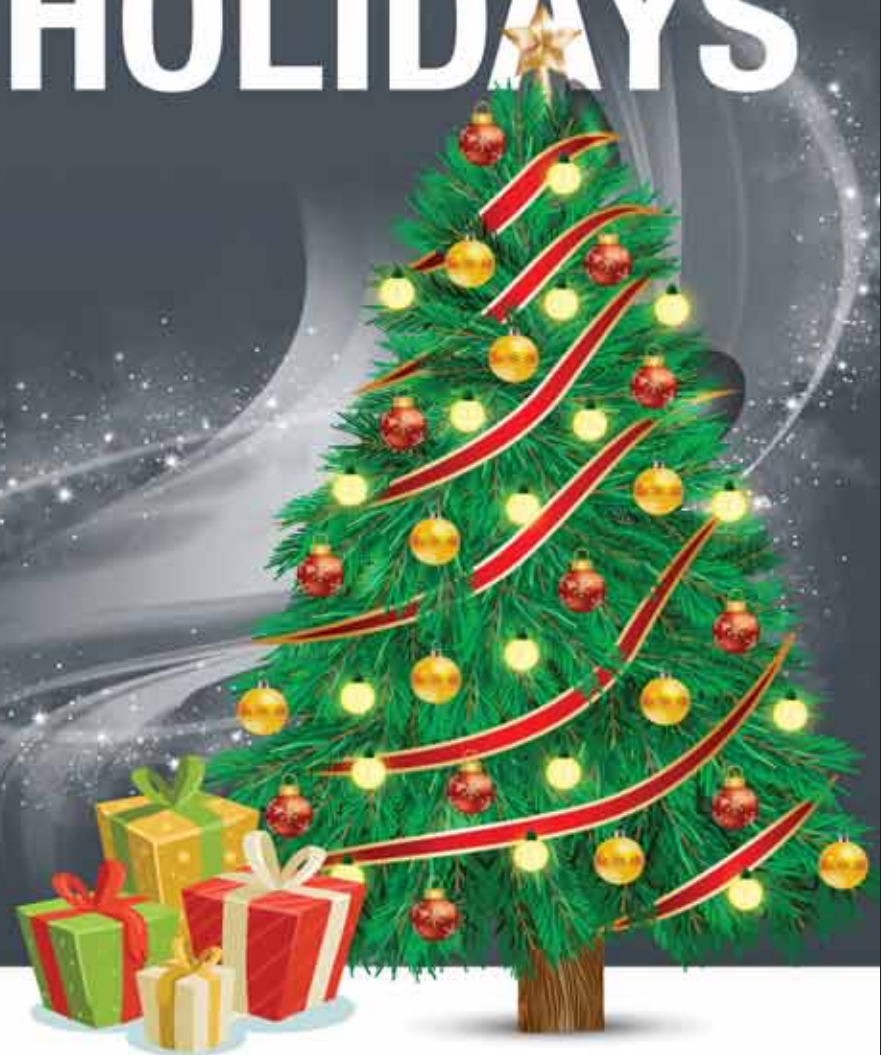
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