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MARCH 2019
VOL 13 ISSUE 10

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Government of Canada to Fund over \$500 Million to Support Emissions and Clean Growth

Government of Canada supports climate action by ZooShare Biogas Co-operative in Toronto

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March 11, 2019 - Toronto, Ontario

Canadians are feeling the impacts and costs of climate change first hand. By working together, we can take action on climate change in a way that benefits all Canadians. That's why the Government of Canada is working with businesses, cities and towns, Indigenous communities, universities, schools and hospitals to reduce pollution, improve our health, and make life more affordable.

Today, Gary Anandasangaree, Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Rouge Park, on behalf of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Catherine McKenna, announced support for climate action by ZooShare Biogas Co-operative. The Government is investing up to \$2.7 million to help ZooShare Biogas add new digester technology to its existing biogas plant in Toronto, which turns animal waste from the Toronto Zoo into agricultural fertilizer. The project will divert waste from landfills, turning it instead into a commercially viable commodity, and will reduce carbon pollution.

The funding comes from the Government of Canada's Low Carbon Economy Fund – an important part of Canada's climate plan. The Fund invests in projects that reduce carbon pollution, save money, and create good jobs in a clean economy. According to Clean Energy Canada, the energy-efficiency measures in Canada's climate plan will help improve Canada's economy and environment between now and 2030 by creating 118,000 new jobs, boosting our GDP by \$356 billion, and saving Canadian households an average of \$114 a year.

Canada's climate plan puts Canada on track for the biggest reduction in carbon emissions in our country's history. The plan includes over 50 measures including investing in clean energy and phasing out coal power, building public transit, and introducing a price on carbon pollution so that it is no longer free to pollute.



L-R: Toronto City Councillor for Scarborough-Rouge Park, Jennifer McKelvie, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism (Multiculturalism) & MP for Scarborough-Rouge Park, Gary Anandasangaree, Hon. John McKay, MP - Scarborough—Guildwood, Daniel Bida, Director of ZooShare, Biogas Project, Dolf DeJong, CEO, Toronto Zoo, and Dave Borins, Director of Community Renewable Energy Projects at Bullfrog Power.

- The ZooShare Biogas Plant in Toronto, Ontario will receive up to \$2.7 million in funding through the Low Carbon Economy Challenge Champions stream. This funding helps pay for an expansion of the plant processing capacity so it can divert even more organic material from landfills.

- Funding will also help ZooShare install new self-cleaning digester technology that separates organic material and contaminants like plastics. That means an even higher quality end product will be available to local farms since more contaminants are removed.

- ZooShare works with nearby farms that can use the resulting natural product as a high nutrient, viable alternative to chemical fertilizers.

- The Low Carbon Economy Fund is divided into two parts:

1. The Leadership Fund provides up to \$1.4 billion to provinces and territories to leverage investments in projects and programs that will generate clean growth and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to support the Pan-Canadian Framework.

2. The Challenge provides over \$500 million in funding to support projects that will leverage ingenuity across the country to reduce emissions and generate clean growth.

The Challenge is being delivered through two streams.

- o The Champions stream, valued at \$450 million, was open to provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous communities and organizations, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations.

Contd. on page 37

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Advice for Canadians: Register when travelling abroad

February 28, 2019 - Ottawa, Ontario - Global Affairs Canada

The government takes seriously its responsibility to support Canadians travelling abroad.

It's much easier for us to help if Canadians have registered with us and let us know where they are travelling. That is why the Government of Canada has a helpful service that can directly notify Canadian travellers during an emergency.

Registration of Canadians Abroad should definitely be part of any travel plans:

When there is an emergency abroad, such as a natural disaster or civil unrest, we notify registered Canadians and provide them with important information, such as instructions during emergencies and updates to the Travel Advice and Advisories for the country they are visiting.

If there is an emergency at home, we can notify travellers and facilitate contact between them and their family and friends in Canada.

The service is free, fast, mobile-friendly and confidential.



The best time to register is before leaving Canada, but it is also possible to register while travelling, whether online or in person at a Canadian government office abroad.

In addition to signing up for the service, before leaving, consider:

giving a detailed travel itinerary and contact details to family or friends in Canada;

providing family or friends with the telephone number for our Emergency Watch and Response Centre; and

carrying contact information for the closest Canadian government offices abroad in the countries you plan to visit. **via: Canada.ca**

Message from Andrew Scheer, Leader of The Conservative Party of Canada

Ash Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Millions of Christians here at home and around the world will gather today on Ash Wednesday, a day of prayer, fasting, and repentance, to begin the penitential season of Lent. During today's special prayer services, ashes are placed on people's heads as a reminder of one's mortality and the need to seek forgiveness.

Culminating with Good Friday and Easter Sunday, Lent is a time during which Christians seek to reflect on and renew their spiritual lives. Following Jesus's example, it is a way to mark the forty days and nights that he spent alone in the desert in fasting and prayer, and a time when we can reded-

icate ourselves to God and to one another. Canadians know how fortunate we are to live in this remarkable country. However, we also know that far too many of our neighbours are struggling. On Ash Wednesday and during Lent, please join me in reaching out to the people in our communities who need our assistance and prayers. Let us also pray for and continue to work on behalf of all of those who continue to suffer around the world, including those who are subjected to unspeakable violence and persecution simply for practicing their faith.

On behalf of Canada's Conservatives, please accept my best hopes and wishes for a blessed Ash Wednesday.

Ontario Adds New Rest Area on Highway 401: Improving Road Safety for Commercial Vehicles

February 15, 2019 - The Ontario Government is improving road safety along Highway 401 with the opening of a new rest area for commercial vehicles, which will provide a safe area for truck drivers to stop.

After working closely with the Mayors in the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Ontario acted quickly to build the new rest area by repurposing a former Truck Inspection Station located on Highway 401 Westbound in Gananoque.

This new rest area will provide a safe place for commercial vehicle drivers to stop and take a break. Rest areas have several road safety benefits including; helping drivers rest and combat fatigue, providing a space for drivers to inspect their vehicles and providing a safe area that allow drivers to wait out poor weather conditions.

"I'm proud to be part of a government that is committed to improving road safety in all parts of the province," said Jeff Yurek, Minister of Transportation. "Adding this rest area is an important step to making this part of the highway safer for all commercial vehicle drivers and road users."

"I'm pleased Minister Yurek and our government share my long-standing commitment to make the Highway 401 corridor in our region safer for all motorists and to ensure the smooth flow of people and products that is critical



to our economy," said MPP Steve Clark,

Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. "This new rest area to give commercial vehicle drivers a place to take a break - or pull over during dangerous driving conditions - is another important step in our ongoing efforts to improve safety on Highway 401."

"The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville is pleased to see Minister Yurek announce the opening of an additional rest area by repurposing a former Truck Inspection Station," said Pat Sayeau, Warden, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville.

"We are pleased that the province considers road safety a priority," said Corinna Smith-Gatcke, Mayor of Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands. "This will provide a safe area for truck drivers to rest and utilize currently unused provincial land. It's a win-win. -

news.ontario.ca

Canada calls for de-escalation between India and Pakistan

February 27, 2019 - Ottawa, Ontario - Global Affairs Canada - The

Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs, today issued the following statement:

"Canada is gravely concerned about rising tensions between India and Pakistan. We urge both sides to exercise maximum restraint and avoid any further military escalation.

"Dialogue between India and Pakistan is needed to identify a durable diplomatic solution and maintain peace and security in the region.

"Canada remains steadfast in its support of the global fight against terrorism. We are committed to working with India, Pakistan and our international partners in this effort."

- **Canada.ca**



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International Women's Day 2019: Think equal, build smart, innovate for change

On March 8, 2019, Canada and the rest of the globe will commemorate International Women's Day 2019 or IWD 2019. The United Nations established this day as a moment of reflection on the progress made, call for change, and a celebration of the courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities.

"Think equal, build smart, innovate for change." This is the motto leading the empowerment of women this 2019 in today's modernizing society and economy.

Accordingly, this 2019 theme focuses on innovative ways in which we can advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, particularly in the areas of social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure.

This idea of innovation is especially timely given that we are in the midst of drastic digital technological change and modernization.

Innovation and technology provide unprecedented opportunities, yet trends indicate a growing gender digital divide and women are under-represented in the field of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and design. It prevents them from developing and influencing gender-responsive innovations to achieve transformative gains for society. From mobile banking to artificial intelligence and the internet of things, it is vital that women's ideas and experiences equally influence the design and implementation of the innovations that shape our future societies.

For 2019, echoing the priority theme of the sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW63), in 2019 we look to industry leaders, game-changing start-ups, social entrepreneurs, gender equality activists, and women innovators to examine the ways in which innovation can remove barriers and accelerate progress for gender equality, encourage investment in gender-responsive social systems, and build services and infrastructure that meet



the needs of women and girls.

More importantly, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal's put forward by the United Nations have articulated strategic goals for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

One of these several commitments is to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

To make your voice heard in support of International Women's Day, social media is a powerful and effective way to spread awareness and raise support for a cause. This can be accomplished by making a range of quotes shareable that speak on women's empowerment, equality and rights in today's 2019 society.

"Women belong in all places where decisions are being made... It shouldn't be that women are the exception." - Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

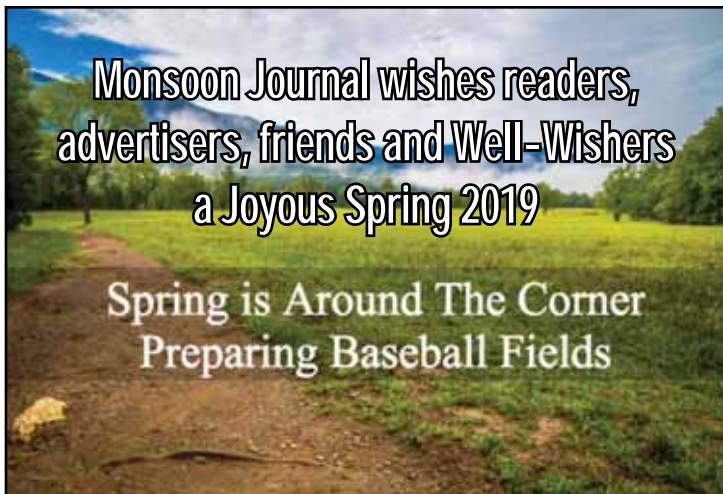
"I used to not like being called a 'woman architect.' I'm an architect, not just a woman architect. The guys used to tap me on the head and say 'you're OK for a girl.'"

But I see an incredible amount of need from other women for reassurance that it can be done, so I don't mind anymore." - Zaha Hadid, Architect

By Harrish Thirukumaran, 2019 Master of Public Policy candidate, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto

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Canada Historical Milestones:

March 30, 1954

It's a big day for Torontonians, as the city opens the first subway system in Canada. The network initially consists of four lines, including the 7.4-kilometre Yonge Street line. The subway is built to address significant expansion by the Queen City.

"The heart's memory eliminates the bad and magnifies the good." - Gabriel García Márquez (March 6, 1927 - April 17, 2014) Colombian Novelist

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

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Caregivers will now have access to new pathways to permanent residence

Launching 2 new 5-year caregiver immigration pilot programs

February 23, 2019 - Toronto, ON

Caregivers will soon have access to 2 new 5-year caregiver immigration pilots that will replace expiring and ineffective pilot programs. The new pilots will allow caregivers to come to Canada together with their family and provide a pathway to permanent residence.

Caregivers will also soon have greater flexibility to change jobs quickly, and barriers that prevent family members from accompanying caregivers to Canada will be removed, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Minister Ahmed Hussen announced today.

Under the new pilots, applicants will be assessed for permanent residence criteria before they begin working in Canada. Once the caregiver has their work permit and 2 years of work experience, they will have access to a direct pathway to become a permanent resident.

These pilot programs will replace the Caring for Children and Caring for People with High Medical Needs pilots and include:

- Occupation-specific work permits for caregivers, providing the ability to change jobs quickly when necessary.

- Open work permits for spouses/common-law partners and study permits for dependent children, to allow the caregiver's family to accompany them to Canada.

In addition, the Minister also launched the Interim Pathway for Caregivers, which will be open from March 4, 2019, until June 4, 2019.

This interim program is being launched after hearing directly from caregivers and interested parties that the previous changes made in 2014 were not well understood. Many caregivers began working for families in Canada, only to find out later that they were not going to qualify for permanent residence under an existing program.

To address this issue, the Interim Pathway for Caregivers will provide those caregivers an opportunity to stay in Canada permanently. The interim program will have modified criteria compared to the current pilot programs and offer a pathway to permanent residence for caregivers who, in good faith, have come to Canada and are providing care to Canadians, without a clear pathway to permanent residence.

The Government of Canada contin-

ues to be committed to family reunification and eliminating backlogs across all immigration streams. In 2017, the Government committed to eliminating 80% of the caregiver backlog and reducing the processing time from its peak of more than 60 months. To date, the Government has reduced 94% of the backlog and reduced the processing time to 12 months.

"Caregivers provide care to families in Canada that need it, and it's time for Canada to care for them in return. We are providing them with both the opportunity to bring their family members here and access permanent residency to demonstrate our commitment."

– The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

- In October 2017, there were about 9,000 cases, representing 24,000 caregivers and their family members, in the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) backlog. Today, there are now only 495 cases left to be processed, representing 2,655 people in all, a reduction of 94 percent.

- The processing time for new applications from those who were grand-



fathered into the LCP is 12 months instead of the peak of 60 months previously.

- Applications under the Caring for Children and Caring for People with High Medical Needs pilots continue to be processed in 6 months or less.

- Both the Home Child Care Provider Pilot and the Home Support Worker Pilot will launch later this year and have a maximum of 2,750 principal applicants each, for a total of 5,500 principal applicants, per year. Spouses/common-law partners and dependent children will not count against the limit.

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US: Gulf Countries Helped Ease India-Pakistan Tensions

By Ayesha Tanzeem

March 4: The United States says it used its allies across the world, particularly those in the Gulf, to help defuse tensions between India and Pakistan, after military skirmishes between the nuclear-armed neighbors last week raised fears of a war.

"We instructed numerous embassies, including in the Gulf, to weigh in on both sides," a senior administration official told VOA on condition of anonymity.

"I think the Saudis were particularly helpful," the official added, as Pakistani officials acknowledged the role of Middle Eastern countries in resolving the crisis. Pakistani Information Minister Fawad Hussain Chaudhry told the Saudi-based Arab News that the crown princes of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates played a "commendable" role during the crisis, adding that other Muslim countries had also been a "great help."

Multiple other countries and international organizations, including the United Nations and the European Union, also worked to calm the situation after India and Pakistan appeared to be inching toward a military conflict.

The South Asian neighbors, once united as British India, have already fought three wars since their independence in 1947. Two of those wars were fought over the disputed Kashmir region that both sides claim. The U.N. considers the area disputed territory, the fate of which should be decided by locals through a plebiscite. Until the dispute is resolved,

both India and Pakistan control a part of Kashmir, with a Line of Control, or LoC, running through the middle as the de facto border.

The latest crisis started after Pakistan-based group Jaish-e-Mohammad claimed responsibility for an attack in Indian-administered Kashmir, at a place called Pulwama, that killed more than 40 security personnel. Pakistan denied involvement in the attack and offered cooperation in investigating the incident.

India, however, accused Pakistan of harboring terrorist groups that frequently target India. Last Tuesday, Indian fighter planes entered Pakistani territory to target what they said were JeM training camps in a strike India called "non-military" and "preemptive" against future attacks.

Pakistan denied any camps existed at the site. Locals dismissed Indian claims of killing hundreds of militants and said only one man was wounded.

A day later, Pakistan responded to what it said was a violation of its air space. Pakistani military spokesman Major General Asif Ghafoor said Pakistani fighter planes locked onto Indian military targets, but deliberately avoided them and fired on open ground instead, in order to avoid an escalation of tensions but also to send a message to India to not violate Pakistani territory again.

In an aerial dogfight that ensued, an Indian MiG-21 jet took a hit and the pilot was captured by Pakistani forces.

The pilot was later returned to India in what Pakistani Prime Minister Imran



Pakistani family waves to their Indian relatives, who are leaving to return to India, after being stranded in Pakistan for a week, at Lahore Railway Station in Pakistan, March 4, 2019.

Khan said was a "gesture of peace," helping to de-escalate the situation.

The international community welcomed the act but continued to press Pakistan to take meaningful action against militants operating on its soil.

On Monday, Pakistani Information Minister Chaudhry told the Reuters news agency the country was going to take such action. Pakistani media also reported through its sources that action against militant outfits seemed imminent.

Chaudhry, however, maintained that his country had nothing to do with the Pulwama attack and the decision to take action against these groups had been made well before the incident.

Prime Minister Khan says Pakistan

is already taking action against any militant outfits to comply with the requirements of the Financial Action Task Force, an international body that monitors terrorism funding. The FATF has Pakistan on its watch list. In its last report issued in February, the task force said Pakistan has improved but needed further steps to curb funding for terrorism-related activities.

Pakistan's government has issued a new order that a foreign office press release said will "streamline the procedure for implementation of Security Council Sanctions against designated individuals and entities."

- VOA News

US Sees Possible Easing of India-Pakistan Tensions

by Ayesha Tanzeem and Anjana Pasricha

Feb 28 - U.S. President Donald Trump signaled there might be an easing of tensions between nuclear-armed South Asian rivals India and Pakistan after days of escalation that resulted in skirmishes between their air forces and fears of all-out war.

"I think reasonably attractive news from Pakistan and India. They've been going at it and we've been involved in trying to have them stop. Hopefully, that's going to be coming to an end," the U.S. president said at a press conference in Vietnam after he finished a second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Later in the day, Pakistan's prime minister, Imran Khan, announced his country was going to release "as a peace gesture" an Indian pilot captured Wednesday when Pakistan shot down an Indian war plane.

Welcoming Pakistan's announcement, Indian Air Force Vice Marshal R.G.K Kapoor said that the "IAF (Indian Air Force) is happy and looks forward to return of Wing Commander Abhinandan" (Vartaman). Asked if it was being seen as a goodwill gesture, he said, "We see it as a gesture in consonance with Geneva Conventions."

The pilot's return, however, could be "a kind of breakthrough. That could cre-

ate the conditions for any diplomatic discussion, dialogue," says Manoj Joshi, a strategic affairs expert at the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi.

Many analysts on both sides said Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi could not afford to lose face ahead of a tough election soon, so Pakistan might have to offer him something to present to his public.

Khan, according to Lahore-based political analyst Rasool Bakhsh Raees, had already made one such concession by offering to have a dialogue with India on terrorism.

"Pakistan's policy for a decade-and-a-half has been that they were willing to discuss terrorism with Kashmir and a host of other issues," Raees said, calling it a big change and saying that if Modi were wise, he would seize the opportunity.

So far, Modi has avoided taking calls from the Pakistani prime minister, who said he tried to reach out.

Even if the hostilities between the South Asian rivals subside under international pressure, the head of the Institute for Conflict Management in New Delhi, Ajai Sahni, feared that aerial combat along their disputed border in Kashmir could become the "new normal."

"What I see basically is that this is going to turn into the new normal, that as we have the incessant cycle of cross-border

firing, in which hundreds of lives are lost, we will also have now the possibility of occasional or frequent aerial air skirmishes in which more lives will be lost."

Line of control, Kashmir

The Line of Control, the de facto border in Kashmir, is already volatile, with thousands of instances of cross-border shelling in the last few years, disrupting lives in villages close to it.

The shelling was so heavy Tuesday night, according to residents in the border town of Chakothi on the Pakistani side, that they were forced to flee their homes to nearby Muzaffarabad to take shelter.

Tensions between the two countries mounted after an attack earlier this month in Pulwama in Indian-administered Kashmir that killed more than 40 security personnel. A Pakistan-based group, Jaish e Mohammad, claimed responsibility.

Even though Pakistan claims it does not support militant groups and Prime Minister Khan has offered to cooperate in the investigation of the attack, the international community's reaction seems to indicate the country might face long-term pressure over the issue, even after the current crisis is over.

In the wake of the attack, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pressed Pakistan to take "meaningful action against terrorist groups operating on its soil."

The European Union's high repre-

sentative for foreign affairs and security policy, Federica Mogherini, said Pakistan needed to take "clear and targeted action related to all forms of terrorist activity," saying "[t]errorism can never be justified."

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres called for "accountability under international law and the perpetrators of the terrorist acts be brought to swift justice."

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said his country would work to ensure "those responsible for the attack are held to account."

A fresh proposal is expected to be tabled by the United States, Britain and France in the U.N. Security Council to designate the head of JeM, Masood Azhar, as a global terrorist. This has been a long-standing demand of India but previous bids have been blocked by China, ostensibly on behalf of Pakistan. JeM is already on the U.N.'s list of terrorist organizations.

Pakistan's leader said the country was already taking action against all terrorist groups in compliance with the Financial Action Task Force requirements. The international terror funding monitor has placed Pakistan on its watch list.

- VOA News



93 million children with disabilities 'among the most likely to be left behind': UN rights chief

March 4 - Speaking at a Human Rights Council event highlighting how disabled youngsters are more exposed to violence, abuse and neglect, Ms. Bachelet explained that they have the same rights as all children.

Their empowerment depends upon these rights being realized, she said – particularly the equal right to education – before highlighting how learning gives everyone the potential to escape poverty and exploitation.

“Children with disabilities must have a say in all matters that affect the course of their lives...They must be empowered to reach their full potential and enjoy their full human rights – and this requires us to change both attitudes and environmental factors.” Ms. Bachelet insisted.

Discrimination against children with disabilities can begin as soon as they are born, the High Commissioner noted, from authorities choosing not to register births, to separating them from families and placing them in care institutions.

Another key factor preventing the inclusion of disabled youngsters in their communities, and their ability to exercise their rights, is ongoing segregation into special schools, institutions

and sheltered homes.

“This is a legacy of a model which has caused exclusion and marginalisation,” said Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities. “We can no longer have children being hidden away and isolated, children with disabilities must have the opportunity to dream of a full and happy life,” she added.

Addressing the Council, Ms. Aguilar insisted that children with disabilities “face stigma, discrimination, prejudice and barriers. They are abandoned, neglected, socially excluded, segregated, over protected, not given accessibility and the services and support they need.”

In addition to these challenges, she said one in three school-age children with disabilities do not have a primary education, while a child with learning difficulties is almost five times more likely to suffer sexual violence than their peers.

Echoing her message, Moldova children’s rights advocate Dumitrița Cropivnitchi from the non-governmental organization Lumos, described her experience of discrimination, linked to disability.

“Because of my disability, at the age



Children with disabilities are among the most likely to be left behind and the least likely to be heard. I urge States to empower them through inclusive education. – UN Human Rights Chief @mbachelet discussing ChildRights at HRC40 ~ via: twitter.com/UNHumanRights

of five, I was sent to live in an institution as it was the only place I could receive an education,” she said. Can you imagine what it would be like, she added, “for a five-year old to be sent to a huge cold building, that smelt of porridge, and to have her parents replaced by educators, to share a room with 11 others, clothes and live by the rules of the institution?”

After staying there for five years, Ms. Cropivnitchi returned home and benefited from reforms that introduced mainstream schools that she could at-

tend, including one in her village.

“It is indisputable that childhood is meant to be the most beautiful yet also, the most vulnerable stage in life,” she told the Human Rights Council. “During childhood, a child is dependent on adults. Children with disabilities can continue to be dependent and vulnerable their whole life... I ask myself now, how is this correct’, she said, to do this to “the thousands, millions of children around the world?”

- UN.org

India Downplays Impact of US Plans to End Special Trade Treatment

By Anjana Pasricha
March 5, NEW DELHI

India has downplayed the impact of U.S. plans to end New Delhi’s preferential trade status that allows duty free access to products worth \$ 5.6 billion.

Saying that India has not assured the United States that it will provide “equitable and reasonable access” to its markets, U.S. President Donald Trump has directed the U.S. Trade Representative’s office to remove India from a program that grants it preferential trade treatment.

In 2017, India was the biggest beneficiary of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which lowers duties on exports from about 120 developing countries.

While the preferential tariffs give India duty free access to exports worth \$5.6 billion, Indian commerce secretary Anup Wadhawan told reporters in New Delhi that the actual benefits add upto \$190 million. He called them “minimal and moderate.”

He said that India has no plans to impose retaliatory tariffs on U.S. goods.

Despite their fast-growing political and security ties, trade tensions have been brewing between the two countries over the past year as American businesses complain of protectionist hurdles in one of the world’s fastest



growing markets.

India, “has implemented a wide array of trade barriers that create serious negative effects on United States commerce,” a statement from the U.S. Trade Representative office said.

President Trump has called India a “high tariff” country and repeatedly complained of high levies imposed by India on exports such as imported whiskey and Harley-Davidson motorcycles.

Indian officials refute that. “Our tariffs are very comparable to the more liberal developing economies, they are comparable to and even developed economies,” Wadhawan told reporters. “We have some tariff peaks. So you can’t pick up one or two items and believe that our entire tariff structure is high.”

The U.S. Trade Representative’s Office has said that India’s removal from the GSP would not take effect for

at least 60 days.

Indian exports that enjoyed preferential tariffs include automobile parts, chemicals, precious metal jewelry and certain raw materials.

Trade experts in New Delhi agree that the overall impact of the U.S. withdrawal of preferential tariffs is not significant, but warn that much of the hit will be taken by sectors that create employment in a country that desperately needs more jobs.

“The products where the GSP impact is more are the labor intensive sectors such as handicrafts, agriculture and marine products,” according to Ajai Sahai, the head of the Federation of Indian Export Organizations. He points out that it comes at a time when Indian exports are grappling with a slowdown.

Contentious areas

There are other contentious areas in the trade relationship between the

two countries. The United States has been leaning on India to reduce the trade surplus of about \$23 billion out of the total bilateral trade of \$126 billion. In New Delhi, officials point out that the deficit has been declining and say the gap will be further reduced as India increases its energy and defense purchases – India has begun importing shale oil from the United States and military equipment sales have been rising.

Indian price controls on medical devices, restrictions on agricultural imports and recent policies that are disrupting the business model of online retail giants such as Amazon have also irked Washington.

The new e-commerce policy was announced in December on demands from tens of thousands of retail traders who complain of losing business to online companies. The traders form a core support base for Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party, which is gearing up for a general election expected to be announced shortly.

India is not the only country facing an end to preferential market access -- the United States has announced that it will also end Turkey’s preferential trade status, saying it no longer qualifies as it is “sufficiently economically developed.”

- via VOA News



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

A mother died recently. Not news. She died in mental anguish. Perhaps news.

She died not knowing whether her youngest child, a daughter, was living or dead.

She had been campaigning for 10 long years to find out - and died still not knowing.

While a very few media organisations reported this as news, others wanted to know what was news-worthy about it. It's not news they said. It's not new either they said.

People disappeared in Sri Lanka all the time. Not just in the North and East, but also in the South, especially during the JVP uprisings. What of it?

News Value

When something terrible happens regularly, it doesn't lose its news value. We might have become desensitised to it as mainstream news, with the latest dead mother and her still missing daughter just one more micro decimal point to add to a large statistic - but “so what” being the response is hugely problematic.

Was there no way this poor lady could have had closure before her death?

Why is there so much eye-rolling at the very idea?

She wanted to know if her daughter was dead or alive - is that so beyond our government, who detained her daughter in Mullivaikal back in 2009? Shouldn't the government be held accountable? Shouldn't they deliver some answers as to what exactly happened to her detained daughter under their watch, instead of continuously obfuscating the matter?

This mother was a native of Mullaitivu who died there last week on February 12. Until then, despite being an elderly heart patient, she had taken part in the nearly two years long running protests by the families of the disappeared searching for their loved ones. She had sat in thatched makeshift huts under the burning sun for more than 500 days, holding a picture of her daughter - demanding an answer as to where she was. She died, still not knowing.

This mother Saraswathy, had given birth to four children. Three had joined the LTTE and died in battle - she was certain of their deaths. As such, while definitely grieving over them, she also had closure over them. Anguish over their current whereabouts or welfare did not rob her peace of mind.

Her last decade of life was blighted due solely to anguish over her youngest child; daughter Parvathy who went missing in the last stages of the war in 2009.

Amidst all the trauma this mother had gone through - the various trials of war she would have had to undergo until 2009, including losing three of her children first to the LTTE, then to death - this last remaining blow of her missing child was likely the most traumatising.

The pain of limbo

I didn't interview this mother, but I have spoken to many other mothers like her across various protest sites in the North. Their pain, long years after war ended, pulses palpably in the air around them still.

The shelling and bombing around them stopped a long time ago, but their inner trauma still holds them in thrall - they neither notice nor care that the chaos has



stopped for everyone else. Their world is still in chaos.

The former Defence Secretary and current presidential hopeful Gotabhaya Rajapaksa gave an interview to a leading English Daily recently in which he acknowledged for the first time the use of white vans by the government to abduct people. He maintains that he himself was not responsible for it - but also maintains that this is something that happens ‘all over the world’ as well as carried out by ‘all previous governments’ in Sri Lanka.

Rather dubious counter assertions. That makes it alright, does it?

He also went on to claim that since 2005, it was only LTTE who were thus abducted (patently not true), while in earlier eras under other government regimes, Sinhala youths were arbitrarily abducted in the JVP uprisings.

This is one of those puerile counter arguments of whataboutism that always leaves me scratching my head. It keeps cropping up regularly whenever minorities here talk about what happened to them and ask for justice. What exactly is being purported with these counter arguments?

That it happened in the South too, therefore it is alright if it happens in the North and East?

It happened to Sinhalese too, so Tamils and Muslims shouldn't ask for justice over their disappeared and murdered? The ‘logic’ simply doesn't compute.

Yet this is the counter argument we receive all the time. “It happened in the South too.” “Our youths were arbitrarily killed too.”

Yes, that it happened in the South, and to Sinhala youths too is indeed heinous but how is that the answer to Tamil parents asking what happened to their children? There are Sinhalese parents looking for answers to their missing to this day. We are aware of that. So why not work to give them answers too, instead of brushing off their very just demands for answers with some tripe version of “All's fair in love and war! Don't try to hold the government accountable”?

Accountability

The government is accountable to the people. What is so hard to understand about that?

Also, nice work claiming Sinhalese

youths were arbitrarily picked up while all Tamils similarly abducted by white vans were only the LTTE.

As a reporter from the Tamil community, let me now reiterate what I have to reiterate every time I bring up issues such as these:

Yes, I am aware the LTTE carried our heinous crimes against humanity.

No, I am not a supporter of the LTTE.

No, my advocating for the pain of the families of the disappeared does not mean that I condone what the LTTE did.

Not all of us Tamils are the LTTE however. What is so hard to understand about that? Not all of us detained, tortured and murdered were from the LTTE either.

Just as Sinhalese youths were arbitrarily picked up in the JVP eras, Tamil youths were arbitrarily picked up all over the country in the war years. All the people thus picked up by the government, whether LTTE or not, have families waiting for them who are owed answers. Yet for now, obfuscation and whataboutism are the answers proffered.

I know a mother searching for her missing younger son - her elder son had died in an LTTE claymore attack, and the younger son was arrested for it. Neither were in the LTTE and were still schoolboys - yet when the army brought a hooded informant to indicate a suspect among all the rounded up youths in the neighbourhood, the thalayatti/gonibilla had nodded at the younger brother - so he who was still grieving his elder brother's death was dragged away despite the protests of the family, and has been missing ever since. This is the way justice operates in this country. She has been searching for her son for two decades now. Is she not owed answers? Can you even begin to compute the level of her trauma?

And as with all other parents similarly traumatized, she said, “I have closure over my dead son. I light a candle to him every death anniversary of his, but I have no closure over my younger son. Where is he? Is he being tortured somewhere? Is he angry with me for not doing enough to rescue him? I dare not rest for a moment, because I am haunted by thoughts of my son languishing somewhere wondering why I have not come to his rescue yet. I have exhausted every avenue possible. I have visited every detention camp in the country asking if my son is there and begging for him back. People with only dead children are lucky.

We with missing children as well are left in torturous limbo. No-one else, even from our own war affected community understands us. They keep telling us to move on. Do they not realise it's impossible? How can a mother move on in life when her child might be alive and getting tortured somewhere? I have not had a single meal in peace since.”

Her husband meanwhile has descended into alcoholism after his sons' tragedy so she has had to become the breadwinner as well. They have two daughters to look after.

The effect on the men

One of the effects not often talked about on the families of the missing is how the men cope versus the women. A culture of toxic masculinity ensures that men do not feel comfortable displaying emotion. It is not an accident that it is the ‘mothers of the disappeared’ who hold vigils at all the protest sites. There are plenty of men grieving their children too - but very few of them feel comfortable enough to display it.

Many of the men descended into alcoholism to deal with their loss. Others keep their emotions bottled up and succumb either to depression or somatoform disorders.

At a psychiatrist's clinic last year, I noticed an elderly couple coming in, the man clutching his heart. He feared he was having a heart attack. The doctor checked - there was nothing wrong with his heart. The doctor then asked him if he had been worrying about anything recently.

No, he replied.

Yes, replied his wife.

The death anniversary of one child had just passed, and the disappearance anniversary of another was coming up.

“You are both grieving,” said the doctor. “Why not talk to each other about it?”

“I talk about it all the time doctor, but he tells me to keep quiet. He doesn't want to discuss our lost children. I find solace by talking to other affected mothers but he refuses to talk to anybody about it.”

“No” said the man. “I am not thinking of my children. I am alright.”

He went away, still clutching his heart.

One day, that heart too will stop beating, after beating painfully all these years. And some of us will continue to ask, “so what?”

Will we ever have an answer, beyond that?



Boeing Likely to Face New Questions After Another 737 Crash

Investigators rushed to the scene of a devastating plane crash in Ethiopia on Sunday, March 10th, 2019 an accident that could renew safety questions about the newest version of Boeing's popular 737 airliner. The Boeing 737 Max 8 operated by Ethiopian Airlines crashed shortly after taking off from the capital of Addis Ababa, killing all 157 people on board.

The plane was new. The weather was clear. Yet something was wrong, and the pilots tried to return to the airport. They never made it. In those circumstances, the accident is eerily similar to an October crash in which a 737 Max 8 flown

by Indonesia's Lion Air plunged into the Java Sea minutes after takeoff, killing all 189 people on the plane. Safety experts took note of the similarities but cautioned against quickly drawing too many parallels between the two crashes.

Alan Diehl, a former National Transportation Safety Board investigator, said the similarities included both crews encountering a problem shortly after takeoff, and reports of large variations in vertical speed during ascent, "clearly suggesting a potential controllability problem" with the Ethiopian jetliner. But there are many possible explanations,



Diehl said, including engine problems, pilot error, weight load, sabotage or bird strikes. He said Ethiopian has a good reputation, but investigators will look into the plane's maintenance, especially since that may have been an issue in the Lion Air investigation.

By contrast, the Ethiopian Airlines CEO "stated there were no defects prior to the flight, so it is hard to see any parallels with the Lion Air crash yet," said Harro Ranter, founder of the Aviation Safety Network, which compiles information about accidents worldwide.

"I do hope though that people will wait for the first results of the investigation instead of jumping to conclusions based on the very little facts that we know so far," he said. Boeing representatives did not immediately respond for comment. The company tweeted that it was "deeply saddened to learn of the passing of the passengers and crew" on the Ethiopian Airlines Max airplane.

The Chicago-based company said it would send a technical to the crash site to help Ethiopian and U.S. investigators.

A spokesman for the NTSB said the U.S. agency was sending a team of four to assist Ethiopian authorities. Boeing and the U.S. investigative agency are also involved in the Lion Air probe.

Indonesian investigators have not stated a cause for the Lion Air crash, but they are examining whether faulty readings from a sensor might have triggered an automatic nose-down command to the plane, which the Lion Air pilots fought unsuccessfully to overcome. The automated system kicks in if sensors indicate that a plane is about to lose lift, or go into an aerodynamic stall. Gaining speed by diving can prevent a stall.

The Lion Air plane's flight data re-

porter showed problems with an airspeed indicator on four flights, although the airline initially said the problem was fixed.

Days after the Oct. 29 accident, Boeing sent a notice to airlines that faulty information from a sensor could cause the plane to automatically point the nose down. The notice reminded pilots of the procedure for handling such a situation, which is to disable the system causing the automatic nose-down movements.

Pilots at some airlines, however, including American and Southwest, protested that they were not fully informed about a new system that could automatically point the plane's nose down based on sensor readings. Boeing Chairman and CEO Dennis Muilenburg said in December that the Max is a safe plane, and that Boeing did not withhold operating details from airlines and pilots.

Diehl, the former NTSB investigator, said the Ethiopian Airlines pilots should have been aware of that issue from press coverage of the Lion Air crash.

The 737 is the best-selling airliner in history, and the Max is the newest version of it, with more fuel-efficient engines. The Max is a central part of Boeing's strategy to compete with European rival Airbus. Boeing has delivered about 350 737 Max planes and has orders for more than 5,000. It is already in use by many airlines including American, United and Southwest.

The Lion Air incident does not seem to have harmed Boeing's ability to sell the Max. Boeing's stock fell nearly 7 percent on the day of the Lion Air crash. Since then it has soared 26 percent higher, compared with a 4 percent gain in the Standard & Poor's 500 index.

VOA News

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Around the World

'Once lost, hearing doesn't come back':

World Health Organization warns on World Hearing Day

March 3: Worldwide, some 466 million people have disabling hearing loss, and the WHO estimates that by 2050 that figure will almost double, affecting one in 10 people. The cost of unaddressed hearing loss is believed to be around US\$ 750 billion.

To mark World Hearing Day 2019, WHO has launched a new mobile and web-based app called "hearWHO," which allows people to check their hearing regularly, and intervene early in case of hearing loss. It can also be used by health workers to screen people in the community, and refer them for diagnostic testing if they fail the screening. Users are asked to concentrate, listen and enter a series of three numbers when prompted. These numbers have been recorded against varying levels of background sound, simulating listening conditions in everyday life. The app displays the user's score, and its meaning, and stores the outcome of the test



Mebratu also known as "Tanki" by his friends, is a 16-year-old boy from Eritrea. Music is one his greatest passions. He loves to listen to Eritrean traditional songs in his headphones found on his journey to Niger.

-UNICEF/UN0264260/Haro

so that the user can monitor hearing status over time.

Symptoms indicating the onset of hearing loss include a ringing sensation in the ear, known as tinnitus; frequently missing parts of a conversation; or a tendency to increase the volume of television, radio or audio devices.

The app is of particular benefit to people who are often exposed to high levels of sound, such as those who listen to loud music or work in noisy places; people who use medicines that are harmful to hearing; and people aged above 60 years. In a statement released by WHO, Dr. Shelly Chadha, Technical Officer of the organization, said that "once lost, hearing does not come back. Through World Hearing Day, and with the support of this app, we encourage people to 'Check your hearing!' in order to help preserve this valuable gift that helps us to enjoy life."

- UN News

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Scarborough Health Network Foundation proudly launches the It's Our Time Family Campaign



With a goal of raising \$5 million to fund critical health care and infrastructure enhancements across all three Scarborough Health Network (SHN) hospitals, SHN Foundation's Family Campaign invites staff and physicians to give back to transform the patient experience for our Scarborough community.

"Through the Family Campaign, we now have the opportunity to take the next step forward in funding the innovative projects that will allow us to become Canada's leading community teaching health network. Together, as a family of 5,000 staff and 1,000 physicians, we can, and we will shape the future of care in Scarborough," said Elizabeth Buller, SHN's President and CEO.

On February 25, SHN Foundation hosted the Family Campaign Kick-Off at the Birchmount hospital, where hundreds of staff, physicians, and volunteers came out to show their support. Events at Centenary and General followed on February 26 and 27, and saw Domenic Primucci, President of Pizza Nova; Chair of the SHN Foundation's Diagnostic Imaging Campaign Cabinet; and a passionate volunteer for the Foundation, speak about the importance of family. Domenic related the Family Campaign back to the family he works to build at Pizza Nova, which sponsored lunch at all three events.

"Every donation is important, and every dollar gets us even closer to realizing our goals. By supporting the Family Campaign, we are demonstrating our pride in our hospitals, and we can inspire others in the community to create impact through their own charitable giving," added Michael Mazza, SHN Foundation's President and CEO.

The Family Campaign supports SHN's ongoing, \$100-million capital campaign, raising much-needed investment for the following priorities:

- A new Medical Imaging and Vascular Centre at the General hospital
- The redevelopment of SHN's Emergency Departments at the Birchmount and Centenary hospitals
- The Bridletowne Neighbourhood Hub for Chronic Disease Management
- New medical equipment across all three hospitals

The Family Campaign will run for a total of 10 weeks, from February 25 until May 1, with events and activities taking place across all three SHN hospitals. For more information, visit SupportSHN.ca.



Domenic Primucci, President of Pizza Nova; Chair of the SHN Foundation's Diagnostic Imaging Campaign Cabinet; and a passionate volunteer for the Foundation, speak about the importance of family. Domenic related the Family Campaign back to the family he works to build at Pizza Nova, which sponsored lunch at all three events.





MARKHAM STOUFFVILLE HOSPITAL FOUNDATION'S FORTUNE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL ANNOUNCES \$500,000 DONATION



(L-R): Brad Morris, Chair, Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) Foundation; Mimi Chau, Fortune Leadership Council (FLC); Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation; Alan Kwong, MSH Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair FLC; Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti; Kenny Wan, MSH Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair FLC; Jo-anne Marr, President and CEO, MSH; Former Markham-Unionville MPP Michael Chan.

Markham, ON (February 12, 2019) — On February 11, Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) Foundation's Fortune Leadership Council (FLC) announced the completion of their \$500,000 commitment at their annual Lunar New Year luncheon.

In recognition of this gift, MSH proudly unveiled the outpatient paediatric clinic waiting room in honour of FLC. Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti, Honourary FLC Chair and leaders from the local Chinese community gathered to celebrate the Year of the Pig and this fundraising achievement.

Under the leadership of Co-Chairs, Alan Kwong and Kenny Wan, FLC was able to achieve this goal in three years thanks to the generosity of 25 donors.

"We came together for a common mission – to give back to the community and to sustain quality healthcare at MSH," says Wan, Board Director, MSH Foundation and FLC Co-Chair. "We were able to achieve our goal because of the generosity of many in our business community. I challenge other business and community leaders to join us in expanding our fundraising efforts to support the needs of our hospital."

Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation alongside Jo-anne Marr, President and CEO, MSH commemorated the contributions made by FLC. "Hospitals rely on support from the community to sustain excellent patient care close to home. We are proud to recognize the dedication and generosity of the Fortune Leadership Council for supporting our highest priority needs," says Strong.

FLC's commitment will not end with this gift. The group have already started to plan for their next \$500,000 goal pledging their ongoing support to the hospital, to purchase life-saving medical equipment and innovative technology that helps MSH deliver extraordinary care to its patients and their families.

"My family and I know from personal experience how important MSH is for our community and the compassionate care the doctors and nurses provide every day," says Kwong, Board Director, MSH Foundation and FLC Co-Chair. "I hope that the Fortune Leadership Council initiative is an inspiration to others in the Chinese community to step up and support MSH, so we can continue to make a lasting impact on our community."

Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation exists to enable the growth of Markham Stouffville Hospital by rais-

ing funds and awareness for its ongoing priorities and needs. Donations from the community fund life-saving medical equipment that helps to ensure the delivery of first-class healthcare at MSH.

Fortune Leadership Co-Chairs

Alan Kwong

Alan Kwong is a seasoned entrepreneur, business executive and a committed community volunteer. Mr. Kwong is currently the CEO and Chairman of a private international pharmaceutical consulting company with over 150 staff in Asia, USA and Canada providing consulting services to world's leading pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer, Sanofi Pasteur, Genetech and Novartis.

He is the recipient of many awards including the Canadian Chinese Legend Award, the Ontario Volunteer Service Award and the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Award.

Mr. Kwong, a Markham resident, who joined the board of the Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) Foundation in 2016 and together with board member Kenny Wan, formed the Fortune Leadership Council to engage the local Chinese community to raise awareness of the needs of MSH and to raise funds in support of the hospital.

Kenny Wan

Kenny Wan is an accomplished business professional and the founder of Kenny Wan Chartered Accountant Professional Corporation with two offices in Markham. A committed community volunteer, Mr. Wan believes strongly in community service and has held many senior volunteer roles including most recently as a Director of Yee Hong Foundation, Ambassador with Mon Sheong Foundation, member of the Mount Albert District Lions Club and Past President of the Richmond Hill and Markham Chinese Business Association.

Mr. Wan, a Markham resident, who joined the board of the Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) Foundation in 2015 and together with board member Alan Kwong, formed the Fortune Leadership Council to engage the local Chinese community to raise awareness of the needs of MSH and to raise funds in support of the hospital.



(L-R): Jo-anne Marr, President and CEO, MSH; Kenny Wan, MSH Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair FLC; Alan Kwong, MSH Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair FLC; Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation.



(L-R): Suzette Strong, CEO, MSH Foundation; Kenny Wan, MSH Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair FLC; Alan Kwong, MSH Foundation Board Member and Co-Chair FLC; Jo-anne Marr, President and CEO, MSH; Brad Morris, Chair, MSH Foundation.

Better community partnerships enhance the patient experience for Scarborough seniors



Scarborough's getting older and wiser. With an expected growth of 46 per cent by 2028 among Scarborough residents over age 65, care for our community, in our community, is more important now than ever before.

The Scarborough Emergency Department/Long-Term Care Transitions Working Group hosted a recent conference at Scarborough Health Network (SHN), gathering the best minds in our community to share ideas and proven concepts for addressing the health needs of this population.

Formed to improve the health experience of LTC and retirement home residents, their families, and care providers in Scarborough, the working group is made up of community and health system partners, including the family member of an LTC resident, and co-chaired by SHN's Michele James, Vice President, People and Transformation; Ivan Ip, Executive Director, McNicoll Centre, Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care; and Jeffrey Gardner, Director of Home and Community Care for the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN).

Making care seamless

Bringing together more than 100 health experts from SHN, LTC homes, retirement homes, the Central East LHIN, and community service providers from across Scarborough, the conference challenged participants to explore:

- Providing a seamless experience for patients transitioning between hospitals, LTC centres and retirement homes by strengthening relationships between institutions;
- Helping people who are living in LTC and retirement homes to avoid ED visits; and
- Giving people who are living in LTC and retirement homes safe and timely medical care at home.

In addition, the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN), Revera Living, Toronto Paramedics, Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care, and Niagara Health Services shared worthwhile insights and key learnings from their organizations.

"Each of us came to the table with common goals: comprehensive communication and better collaboration between patients, health professionals, and community partners," said Shohreh Mahdavi, a manager within SHN's Medicine program.

"We shared best practices and explored innovative ideas for improvement. We want the transition between LTC and retirement homes and the hospital to be seamless."

Hands-on breakout sessions encouraged participants to identify improvement opportunities by using Lean methodology to map and examine patient journeys from LTC/retirement homes to the hospital and back again.

A healthier tomorrow starts in Scarborough

"Shaping a healthier future is core to the work that we do at SHN. But we can't do it alone," said Michele.

"Thanks to the cooperation, dedication, and, most of all, passion, of all of the participants of the Scarborough ED/LTC Transitions conference and working group, together, we can confidently say that a healthier tomorrow starts in Scarborough!"

Though the conference is over, the collaborative work to enhance outcomes for LTC and retirement residents continues, with the Scarborough ED/LTC Transitions Working Group looking to spread this type of cross-sector partnership to other local issues.

BUILDING A STRONGER HEALTH NETWORK FOR YOU

Innovative transformation will improve care at Scarborough Health Network

By *Elizabeth Buller, President and CEO, and Dr. Dick Zoutman, Chief of Staff Scarborough Health Network*

A community forms a close bond with its local hospital. It's where we bring our children, parents, and friends, for care at some of life's most joyful and most difficult moments.

At Scarborough Health Network (SHN) we take that bond very seriously.

Scarborough has one of the most diverse populations in Canada. We are a community of communities that is ever-changing. Our mission at SHN is to improve lives through exceptional care. We take that mission seriously and the work we are doing to plan for our future will help us meet this goal. We are proud of our three hospitals: Birchmount, Centenary and General – and the integrated services they provide. We are one health network for all of Scarborough.

First, let us set the record straight about troubling rumours regarding our Birchmount hospital in relation to recent changes in the Women's and Children's program. Over the past few weeks there have been a number of voices stating that these changes will lead to the closure of the Birchmount hospital.

The Birchmount hospital is not closing. The Birchmount hospital is and will remain a vibrant community hospital and we are committed to continued investment in it.

The Birchmount hospital's Emergency Department is not closing or decreasing its services. The Emergency Department will continue to provide the excellent care it delivers for the community both today and into the future.

Importantly, SHN is one network, and our hospitals and satellite sites are working together and supporting each



Elizabeth Buller,
President and CEO



Dr. Dick Zoutman,
Chief of Staff

other to provide everyone in Scarborough with exceptional care no matter which hospital you visit.

This is an exciting and challenging time for health care in our community. We are now embarking on a full-scale review of all our corporate and clinical programs. This review will help us build the best health system in Scarborough so that you can receive exceptional care close to home, instead of going downtown. We have an ambitious strategic plan and a strong vision for the future: to be Canada's leading community teaching health network.

As we mentioned, SHN is realigning our Women's and Children's program. Over the past months, a committee of people who know the program best – doctors, midwives, nurses, patients, and families – studied options, and consulted with experts and community members about providing optimal care for Scarborough's women and children.

The committee received advice, ideas, and suggestions from hundreds of people, before recommending SHN reinvest in our birthing and children's care at the Centenary and General hospitals.

The program's clinical team of experts supported this recommendation, which SHN's Board of Directors approved at a public meeting last month.

Health care is constantly changing and advancing with new discoveries every day. We must always be looking carefully at how we are delivering our care at SHN. We look forward to continue working with you to reimagine and redesign how we deliver that care.

We are SHN: three hospitals and eight satellite sites, committed to delivering exceptional care to you and your families through redesign, renewal, and innovation. Together, we will shape the future of care.

About Elizabeth Buller:

Elizabeth Buller is President and CEO of SHN. With more than 30 years of experience in health care, Liz is committed to building strong health systems through innovation and transformation. Liz is a nurse by training, with experience in ER and Critical Care.

About Dr. Dick Zoutman:

Dr. Dick Zoutman is the Chief of Staff at SHN. He is an accomplished academic physician who brings a wealth of senior leadership experience to SHN. An Internist, Infectious Disease Specialist, and Medical Microbiologist by training, Dr. Zoutman is a Professor in the Health Care Quality Graduate Program at Queen's University and in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto.





US Ambassador launches Video Recording Studio for Youth in Sri Lanka North

March 7, 2019 at The American Corner Jaffna

Use your voice! Ambassador Teplitz launched a new video recording studio with Youth Forum volunteers at The American Corner Jaffna. Digital story-telling helps people connect and businesses grow.





Special Feature

By Kumar Punithavel

Shanthi did not have a wink of sleep the whole night. She had such a scorching headache, that she took two Tylenol tablets and tried to sleep. Her headache did not stop, and she could not sleep. Next to her, husband Sunderesan was asleep, snoring loudly. Giving up trying to sleep, she walked into the parlour and switched on the TV. With the great pain she was in, she could not focus on the TV programme either. Unable to sleep, she got up and walked back to the bedroom. Awoken by the sound of the footsteps Sunderesan mumbled at her and asked “Shanthi haven’t you gone to sleep yet?” She responded, “No Sunthu, I am having a bad headache, which is not going even after taking two Tylenol tablets. Lying down, she said, “I have to go for work tomorrow”.

As usual Shanthi woke up in the morning, had a shower, went to the shrine room and lighted the lamp on the altar, came to the kitchen and made herself a coffee. Sunderesan, who had just woken up, walked into the kitchen and said, “Shanthi you better not go for work today. Let’s both go and see Doctor Ratha. I will phone the office and get short leave.

Shanthi immediately protested saying, “Sunthu, you know how it is at the doctor’s office when you go without an appointment. Let’s go to work and on our return, let’s drop in at the doctor’s office. I will get an appointment when I am at the work place”. She walked away to the bedroom to change mentioning she had some urgent matters to complete at the office.

When dropping Shanthi on the way to work, Sunthu advised her, “Shanthi, if you have a bad headache give me a call. I can always inform and get leave; and we can go to the emergency. Otherwise, I will see you in the evening, and we can see the doctor on our way home”. “Sure, I will be fine, see you in the eve, bye” said Shanthi and walked into her office.

Around two in the afternoon, Sunthu got a call from Shanthi’s office that she had fainted in the office and has been rushed to the emergency at Scarborough General Hospital. Understandably, Sunthu got leave and rushed to the hospital.

Shanthi and Sunthu, were a happy couple. They had everything they desired, but one thing that went missing was a child. They opted not to adopt a child. Each adored the other and when Shanthi fell sick, Sunthu was totally lost. While driving the car unconsciously, Sunthu started tear-

ing. However he managed to steer the car to the hospital and rushed to the emergency ward. Shanthi was in the Critical Care Unit (CCU).

After all the preliminary tests, Shanthi was sleeping unconscious with many tubes and wires attached to her. When he saw the condition of his loving wife, Sunthu felt dizzy. He held on to the chair that was on the bedside. He was confused. What is he to do next? he thought. A nurse walked into the room and said in a very soft voice, “Sir, please sit on that chair. She is in a coma. Please refrain from making any noise”. He retorted back, “What is wrong with Shanthi? Why is she so quiet?”

“How are you related to her?” was the short reply from the nurse. “I am her husband. What is wrong with her? She is not even opening her

tone of doctor’s voice was very reassuring.

Next, the doctor suggested that they step out of the room to discuss the patient’s condition and allow her to get some rest. They walked into the adjoining room, which must have been an interview room, as there were two sofas and a few chairs in it. On a side table, there were some journals and news papers. The doctor asked Sunderesan to take a seat and sat on the second sofa, facing the latter.

After a few moments of reflection Dr. Chou looked at Sunderesan and said, “Mr. Sunderesan, please forgive me, I have some bad news for you and will come to the point directly. On the MRI we found a cyst inside the skull, which has grown fairly big. Though biopsy has yet to be done, we sus-

again, be confident.” Saying this, the doctor stood up, shook Sunderesan’s hand and left the room.

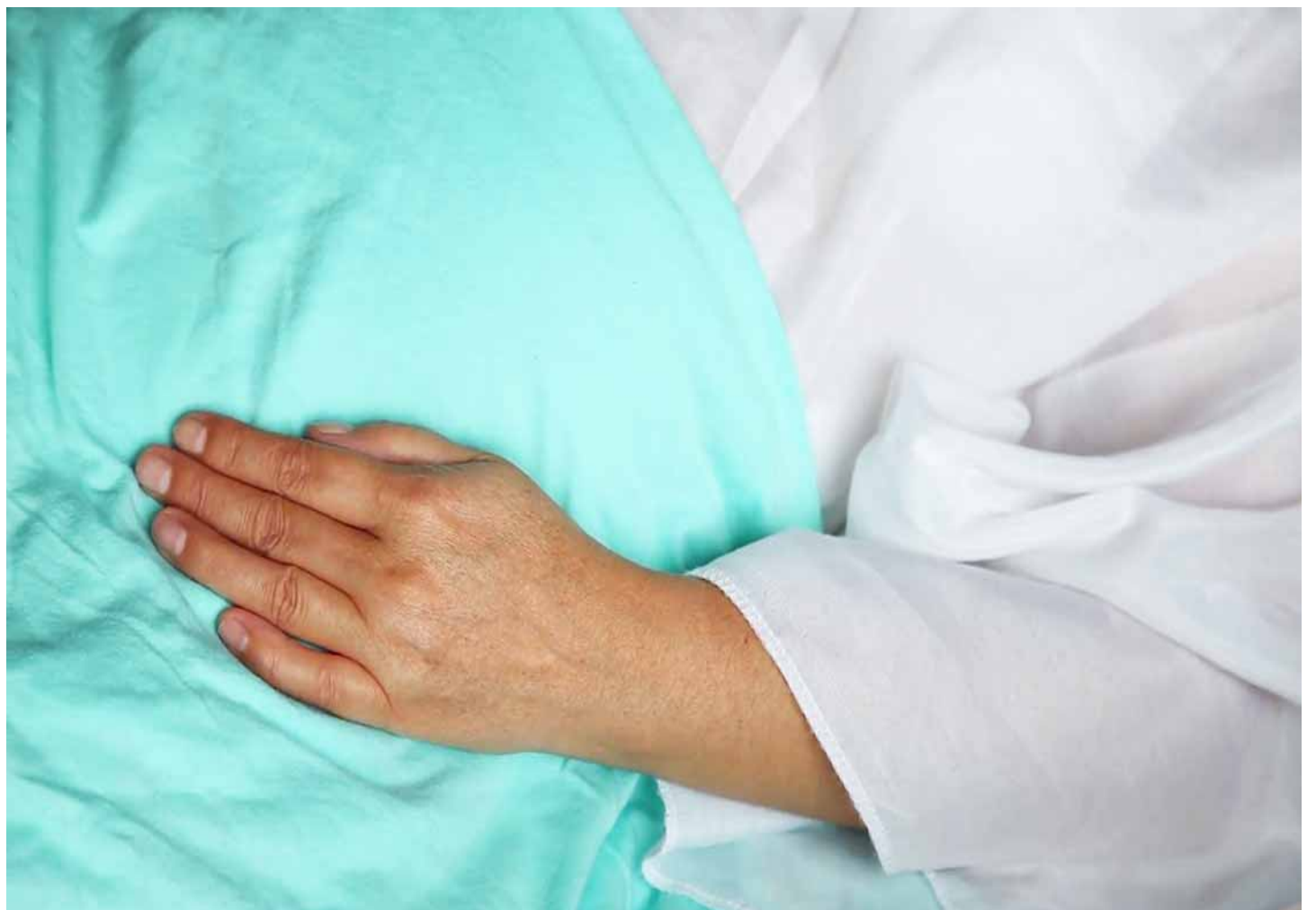
Left alone in the room Sunderesan was confused and sad. What next was the big question in his mind? He was staring at the big picture on the wall, but did not see it.

Days went by very fast. Sunthu informed Prem, Shanthi’s brother who lived in France and her sister Ananthi who lived in Norway by phone. When they arrived, Ananthi stayed with one of her relatives, and Prem decided to stay with his brother-in-law Sunthu.

In the afternoon, Ananthi suggested that her brother-in-law should take some rest and that she will keep her sister company. Prem too suggested that he will stay with Ananthi at his sick sister’s bedside.

Suddenly, Prem asked his sister Ananthi, “How many days of leave did you take before coming here?” She replied she has taken two weeks leave, with the option of extending it if needs be. She also said “It looks like I’ll need more than a month. If

This is life



eyes” said Sunthu. “Yes sir, as I told you, she is in a coma. Let me call the doctor. He will explain to you everything”, said the nurse as she left the room softly closing the door behind her.

In a few moments a young doctor of Asian descendant walked in and came up to Sunderesan and said to him, “Mr Sunderesan I am Dr. Chou”, and shook hands with him. Sunthu was greatly impressed with the way the doctor carried himself, and the

pect it is a fast growing cancer. The growth is pressuring the brain. It has stopped the functions of many parts of the body. Though we are sending painkillers through a drip, the patient is in a comatose stage. We will do all we humanly can do. But, it is prudent that you inform your close relatives. We haven’t lost all hopes, but it is better safe than sorry you know. Here is my cell number. You can call me any time without hesitation. I will take your leave now. Once

not for the beeping sound and the tears coming from her eyes, you will not know that she still is alive”. Prem replied, “Yes, I too feel it may take much longer for her to pass away. Sunthu unnecessarily exaggerates everything. But, I feel sorry for the sister, it makes no sense in prolonging the suffering”.

Immediately, Ananthi pitched in, “Sister is always slow, even at death. I guess she will take her own time”. She was laughing at her own wit. At

that time there, was a soft knock on the door and a young nurse walked in with a wide smile on her face. She introduced herself, saying “I am Mary the volunteer, come here to help today”.

After initial introductions, Prem asked Mary, why his sister is tearing. He wanted to know whether it was the pressure from the cyst on the eyes. Mary turned around to

cause they love you. Really, you are very fortunate. Very soon when you are better, you can take them with your husband to the airport and bid them farewell. Her soothing words were like the rain drops falling on a parched dry land. Her kind words calmed her down and the monitor’s beep sound became more regular. Slowly, she fell asleep.

In the mean time both Prem and

Uncle, is this the way you treat your guests in Canada?”

“Well you said that water was coming down the eye lids. Did you ever think it could be tear drops?”, pointed out David. He went on to ask them what they were discussing. Prem pointed out that it does not matter. After all, Shanthi was in coma! David asked what they both were discussing.

thi protested in unison.

David looked at them kindly and said, “It is the fact that even in coma, one can hear. You must be very careful when you are talking at the bedside of a patient in coma. I really feel sad how Shanthi would have felt”.

At that moment, the volunteer, Mary, came out of the room and gently closed the door. Then she looked at Prem and Ananthi and said, “Sor-



look at the patient. Immediately her tone and action changed. She politely asked them to leave the room immediately and wait outside.

This of course annoyed Prem. He retorted back at Mary saying “Do you know I have come all the way from France and she my sister has come from Norway crossing an ocean to see our sister. It is grossly impolite of you to ask us to leave and stand in the corridor”.

However, Mary politely but firmly asked them to go out and wait in the corridor, saying that she will come and talk to them soon. She closed the door behind them and walked up to Shanthi. She gave a soft kiss on the forehead of Shanthi and wiped off the tears in her eyes. Mary pulled a chair close to the bed, caressed Shanthi’s hands and said softly, “Please don’t take notice of what they said. In fact they have come all this way be-

Ananthi were fuming in the corridor. “Ananthi, it looks like, in Canada, the volunteers are very arrogant”, said Prem.

“Yes, how can she ask us to leave the room abruptly? We will have to make a complaint about her at the hospital main office”, said Ananthi.

At that time, Uncle David came that way, and, with a mischievous smile, asked, “And whom do you want to report to the office?” “Hi Uncle David, when did you come? We were discussing the volunteer, Mary. She is a real bitch. Sister was in a coma and does not know what is happening around. She is lying there motionless, and her eyes were constantly tearing” said Ananthi.

“This white woman, calling herself a volunteer, wanted us to leave the room and wait in the corridor to talk. We, the siblings, have taken leave and travelled so far to see our sister.

“Well it is like this. We were discussing how many days we both had taken leave, yes it looks we were hasty, we discussed, as it looks that Shanthi may be in coma for some time”, said Prem.

“It is not like that, children. Even in a state of coma, the last sense to shut down is the hearing. Even if the person in a coma may not move, he or she can still hear what you both are saying. That is why, in the Tamil tradition, at the moment a person is dying, the person nearby will chant the God’s name in the ear” said David. “But Shanthi was in coma; how can she hear?” both Prem and Anan-

thy, that she had heard your discussion and felt sad. She was crying when I saw her. That is the reason I was so harsh with you. I know I was wrong, but seeing her helpless condition, I lost it. Once again, my sincere apologies”, she said. Then, she quietly walked away.

The three, seeing the rear of that great volunteer, felt in their heart respect for Mary soaring high. Yes she was a great one.

Prem and Ananthi made emotional eulogies at Shanthi’s funeral and left for their homelands much wiser.

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Take it or Leave it

You have no limit for enjoyment. You are in the shopping center NOW. What is your strategy?

Shop 'til You Drop

What if there was a giant shopping center where any and everything you could desire was yours for free on one condition; you couldn't take it with you... An excerpt from "Journey to the Self" Themed event with Prem Rawat in Edinburgh, Scotland.

So, here you are. You're alive - and here is the situation - and this is an analogy. One day you receive this lottery ticket. And you have won! And the ticket allows you, entitles you to go to this shopping mall. And there are beautiful shops in this shopping mall; there is a grocery store in this shopping mall; there's clothing in the shopping mall; there is everything you could possibly imagine in this shopping mall.

And you are excited: "Wow! I get to go there?" And not only do you get to go there; you can have anything you desire. If Bentley is your thing, they have them. If Rolls Royce is your thing, they have them; if Mercedes is your thing, they have them. And you get to have it!

And then you flip the ticket over; there's a caveat. And the caveat is, "You can have anything you want, but when you leave the shopping center, you cannot take anything with you."

"Wow! Aaagh!" Would you be disappointed? I see some people shaking their head. I mean, my God, beautiful things, incredible things... And you can have them! All yours! But you, when you leave the shopping center—which you must—there's a time, you must leave the shopping center, and when you do, you don't get to take anything with you.

What am I talking about? Ta-dah! Here you are—in this most amazing, incredible shopping center. There are the oceans, the mountains. And you can have anything! And one day you



have to leave the shopping center. But when you do, you don't get to take anything with you.

Now, the issue is strategy. Simply that: What are you going to do? What is your strategy going to be? Are you going to stay home, and get angry at this ticket? "How stupid! How weird! I get to go; I can have everything I want, but I don't get to take it out with me? I mean, that's really stupid!" Or are you going to say, "This is the divine joke. Ha-ha-ha"?

What is your strategy? What do you do? And it is precisely the strategy that you must have—you must have a plan. And you must not only have a plan, but you must execute it perfectly. Perfectly!

And in this plan, it is not about lamenting, and it is not about "I wish it was this way; I wish it was that way." No! It is afoot! Here is your ticket; there's the shopping center. This is the time you get in, and this is the time you get out. And there are no "ands, ands, buts" about it. That is it.

So, I'm not here to preach to you. I'm not here to tell you I am better than

you. I'm not here to tell you, "I have a plan; copy my plan." I'm not here to sell you a plan. But I am here to share with

you fifty-plus years of experience, and that's it.

Because I have seen plenty of people who go, "This is stupid. This is weird. This is strange. Why me? This is a torture!"

And I'm here to say, "But, look. One, you have no limit for enjoyment." Right? Just simple stuff, right? Simple stuff? You have no limit. Because nobody has temples or churches or any of the holy places where you go to say, "Dear Lord, please remove some of this happiness; I just can't stand it." It's always about sadness, "Please remove the sadness." But happiness? That was like, "Bring it on!"

We are here. "Is it afoot? Do I want to be a part of it; don't I want to be a part of it? What is it all about; where do I go; where did I come from?" But that's not what it's about, folks. You've got a ticket. And the ticket says, that's the shopping center—and you are in the shopping center now, by the way.

By the way, you're in the shopping center, and it's an opportunity of a lifetime, and you have no strategy, no plan! And so I say, "Keep it simple; you're in. This is what's been given; this is the opportunity you've been given. Have a blast."

Why not? Why not? You feel hungry? Go to the supermarket and eat. Feel thirsty? Go to the supermarket. Drink. Feel like sleeping? Go to the bed section. Find a comfortable bed and rest well. Feel like exercising? Go to where all the cardio equipment is; find a treadmill and go at it. Because you get to do it all.

Prem Rawat



HINDUISM AND WORLD PEACE



By: Sivanesan Sinniah

What is Hinduism?

Hinduism the world's oldest religion has no beginning – it predates recorded history. It has no human founder.

Major scriptures are The Vedas (4), Agamas (28), Upanishads and many more.

Adherents – more than a billion. Mostly in India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal, Malaysia, Mauritius, Africa, Europe, North and South America.

Hinduism has four main denominations: Saivism, Sakism, Vaishnavism and Smartism.

Synopsis of Hinduism

Hinduism is a vast and profound religion. It worships one Supreme Reality (called by many names) and teaches that all souls ultimately realizes Truth. There is no eternal hell, no damnation. It accepts all genuine spiritual paths – from pure Monism to theistic dualism. Each soul is free to find his own way whether by devotion, austerity, meditation or selfless service. Stress is placed on temple worship, scriptures and the Guru Disciple tradition. Festivals, pilgrimage, chanting of holy hymns and home worship are dynamic practices. Love, nonviolence, good conduct and the law of Dharma (sacred Law) define the Hindu path. Hinduism explains that the

soul reincarnates until all Karmas are resolved and God realization is attained. The magnificent holy temples the peaceful piety of the Hindu home the subtle metaphysics and the science of Yoga, all play their part. Hinduism is a mystical religion, leading the devotee to personally experience the Truth within, finally reaching the pinnacle of consciousness when man and God are one. (Sri Sivaya Subramuniya Swami)

Hinduism and Peace

Peace is a reflection of spiritual consciousness. It begins within each person and extends to the home, neighborhood, nation and beyond. It comes when the higher nature, takes charge of the lower nature.

Until we have peace in our own heart, we can't hope for peace in the world. Peace is the natural state of the mind. It is there inside, to be discovered in meditation, maintained through self-control and then radiated out to others. The best way to promote peace is to teach families to be peaceful within their own homes, by settling all conflicts quickly. At a national and International level, we will enjoy more peace as we become more tolerant. Religious leaders can help by teaching their congregation, how to live in a world of differences without feeling threatened, without forcing their ways or will on others. World bodies can make laws which deplore and work to prevent crimes of

violence. It is only when higher nature people are in charge that peace will truly come. There is no other way because the problem of conflict resides within the low minded group, who only know retaliation as a way of life.

Thus from a Hindu point of view, Religious leadership had been given from ancient times, by the saints and sages setting up the norms and standards of behaviour, for the society. They stressed on duties and obligations rather than on Rights and Privileges. Peace and Harmony could prevail, only if we could negate our aggressive egos as far as possible and consider the wants and needs of the other person. In this connection self-analysis is very important. Unless we understand our strengths and weaknesses and adjust ourselves to the environment and to those around us, we must expect quarrels and controversies. It is only the person who is duty conscious, who could adjust to his environment properly.

Peace among persons, groups or nations is not possible without good will, towards one another and goodwill towards one another, is not possible without acknowledging God and God was not honoured and glorified, good will among person has not been achieved, and then peace on earth is almost impossible. So we love to become religious and make inter religious dialogues to build a better world, free of nuclear damage, the arms, race, poverty, ignorance, discriminations

and ensuring development, dignity and justice for all.

At this juncture I would like to congratulate our leaders who are and were in charge of the Administration of this beautiful country Canada, founded in the primary principles of multiculturalism, inter-religious and intercultural amity, tolerance and brotherhood of man. Let our younger generation be taught Moral instruction as a subject in schools. Media must abhor violence, sexual contents, crime and not to give importance to these, as they are corrupting the society in general and younger generation in particular.

The Vedas beseech, Peace be to the earth and to airy spaces. Peace be to heaven, peace be to the waters, peace to the plants and peace to the trees. May all Gods grant to me peace. By this invocation of peace may peace be diffused.

*If there is righteousness in the heart
There will be beauty in character
If there is beauty in character
There will be harmony in the home
If there is harmony in the home
There will be order in the nation
If there is order in the Nation
There will be peace in the world
What is required is righteousness
In the heart and nothing else*

Om Namasivaya



Legendary International Educationist

Padma Shri Dr. Chandran D.S. Devanesan

By: *Thillaiampalam Sivayogapathy*
(Alumnus - Madras Christian College)

It is a great pleasure to write an article with wholehearted affection about a great legend Dr. Chandran Devanesan, who used to be a mentor to me. His selfless contribution to the mankind in various fields, with sincere and loving heart is always commendable. I have a great respect and admiration for his gentlemanly qualities with high esteemed leadership and diplomacy.

Dr. Chandran D.S. Devanesan was educated at Kingswood College, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and University of Cambridge, from where he took his M.A. He is a Ph.D. from the University of Harvard—the subject of his thesis being “The First Forty Years of Mahatma Gandhi”. After holding various responsible positions in India and abroad, he joined the Madras Christian College in the year 1946, as Professor of History. He was the Warden of Bishop Heber Hall, of MCC too. Later in the year 1962, he became the Principal of the Madras Christian College, being the first Indian to hold the esteemed position.

It was a significant landmark in the history of MCC, and the beginning of the fifth stage in its development. An old order passed away and a new order under the Indian leadership began, with a clear vision and with brilliant leadership qualities of Dr. Chandran D.S. Devanesan. During the eventful decade which marked his buoyant stewardship, Dr. Devanesan tried to make the Institution relevant to the fast changing Indian conditions. A man of clear thinking and purpose driven character intended to take the College to a higher level in terms of infrastructure, finance and developmental projects, apart from Academics can be seen from his vision for the College. He strengthened the academic thrust and streamlined the working of the College.

The twenty buildings which came up in various parts of campus and outside vouch for his enthusiastic efforts in increasing student and staff amenities and opening of the College to its neighbourhood.

The experiment on farming was started in the Year 1965, at Madras Christian College, under the enthusiastic Principal, whose daily visits and make valuable suggestions encouraged the farm staff to go ahead on this venture. What was once (1964), a scrub jungle of 100 acres, are now to date seen with high yielding paddy fields (5 acres), a dairy of (80) crossbreds, about 800 Highline Poultry and about 50 Yorkshire Pigs. The farm had produced annually approximately 47,000



litres of milk, 1500 kgs of meat and about 20000 kgs of paddy, all to the value of nearly three lakh of Indian rupees per year!

A keen Educationist, he had been member of the syndicate of Madras University and has served on the University Grants Commission. Also, his valuable contribution to the National Integration Council was very much appreciated on the National level. Widely travelled and familiar with several Universities around the world, Dr. Devanesan is the author of several books relating to Education and Religion. Dr. Chandran Devanesan and Amma (Mrs. Savithri Devanesan) were invited to visit Germany for six weeks in the early year 1970, followed by a visit to Aus-

tralia. Dr. Devanesan utilized such travel opportunities to make MCC better known and better supported internationally. Dr. Chandran Devanesan had the great honour of representing India at the 16th General Conference of UNESCO in Paris, during October 1970.

One of Dr. Chandran Devanesan's greatest contributions to MCC was to coordinate and communicate very effectively with most of the Alumni of MCC nationally and internationally through the MCC Alumni Public Relations Office, with his strong public relations and invited the Alumni to play a big role closely to the development of their Alma Mater MCC!

In a time when there were only a few colleges in the country, MCC was considered as one of the best and most prestigious University College in the country. However, I see things still have not changed since those good old days when were at Tambaram.

In the year 1970, Dr. Chandran Devanesan was awarded the Honour of Padma Shri by the Government of India in recognition of his immense services to education.

In the year 1973, he was appointed by late Hon. Indra Gandhi, Ex-Prime Minister of India as the first Vice-Chancellor of North East Hill University in Shilong, Capitol of the far eastern Indian state of Meghalaya.

My sincere opinion, after having known Dr. Chandran Devanesan very closely for about ten years, he was a gentleman with simplicity, loving heart, service in silence, ever smiling and full of charm on his face, with a positive attitude always!

Both Dr. Chandran and Mrs. Savithri Devanesan's noble quality in short is as follows:

*Realize God on the smiles of the Poor!
haritable mind and help the deserving Needy!*

The above noble qualities made them to start an Organization - “Roofs for the Roofless” and eventually today on the village level, many helpless people were given helping hands by both of them to uplift their life; thereby hundreds of village people have benefited and still to-date benefiting in various ways to see the “Light of Life”!

Dr. Chandran Devanesan's sincere, loving heart speaks!



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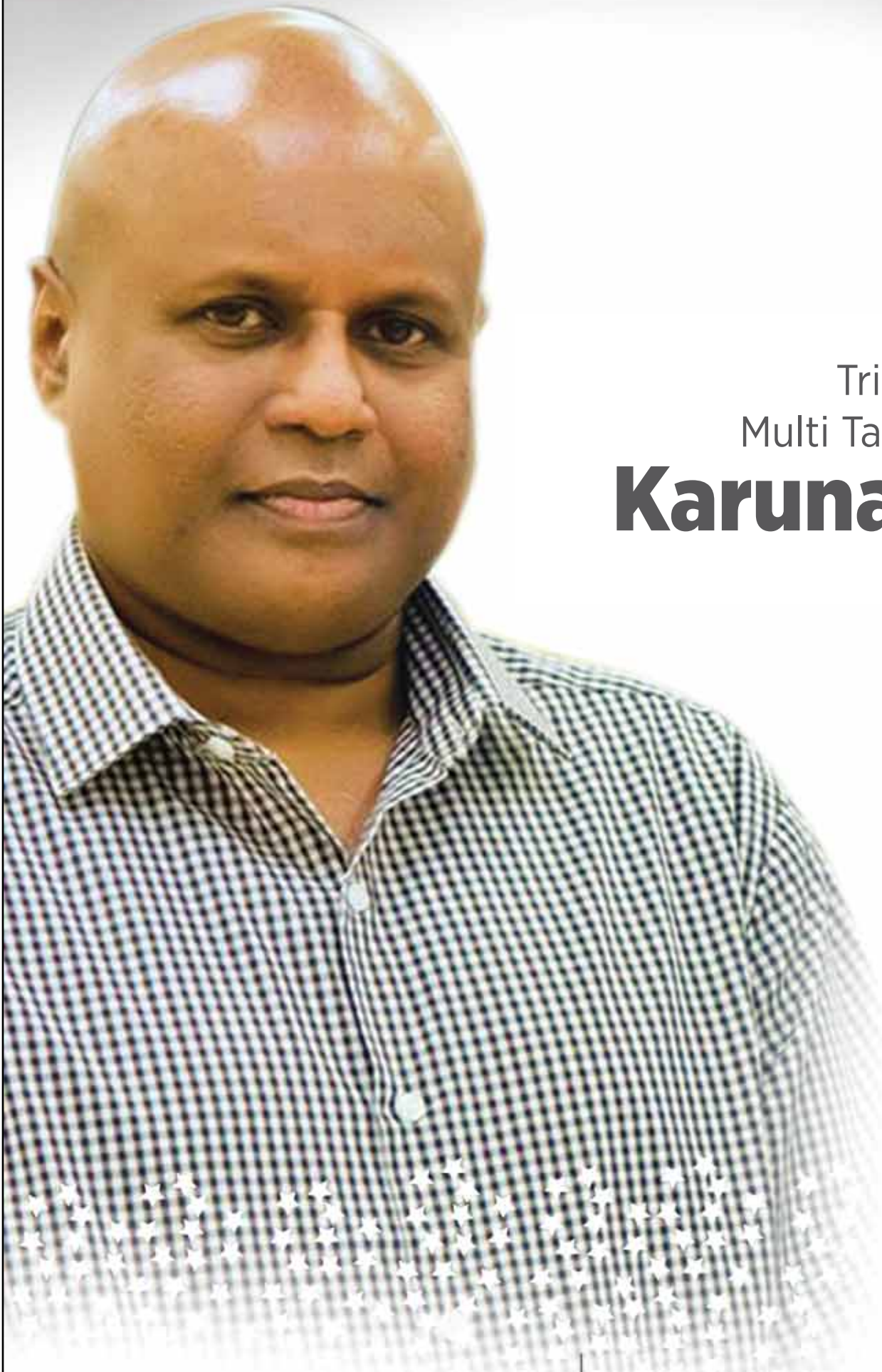
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In Memorium



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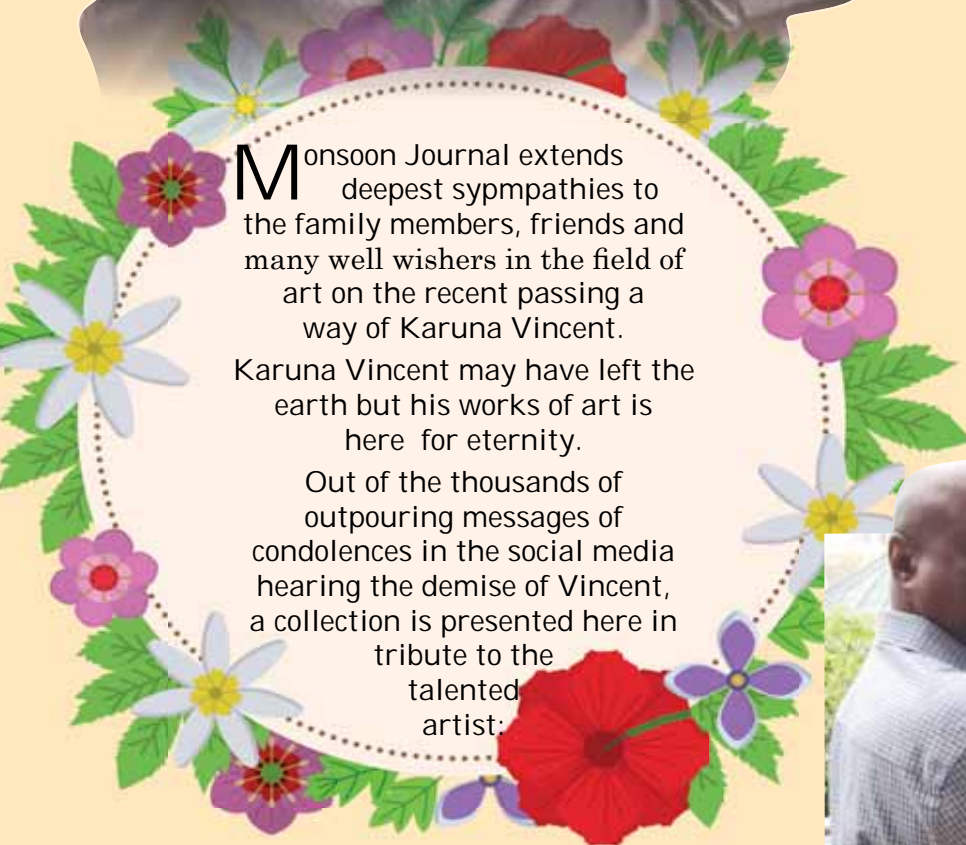
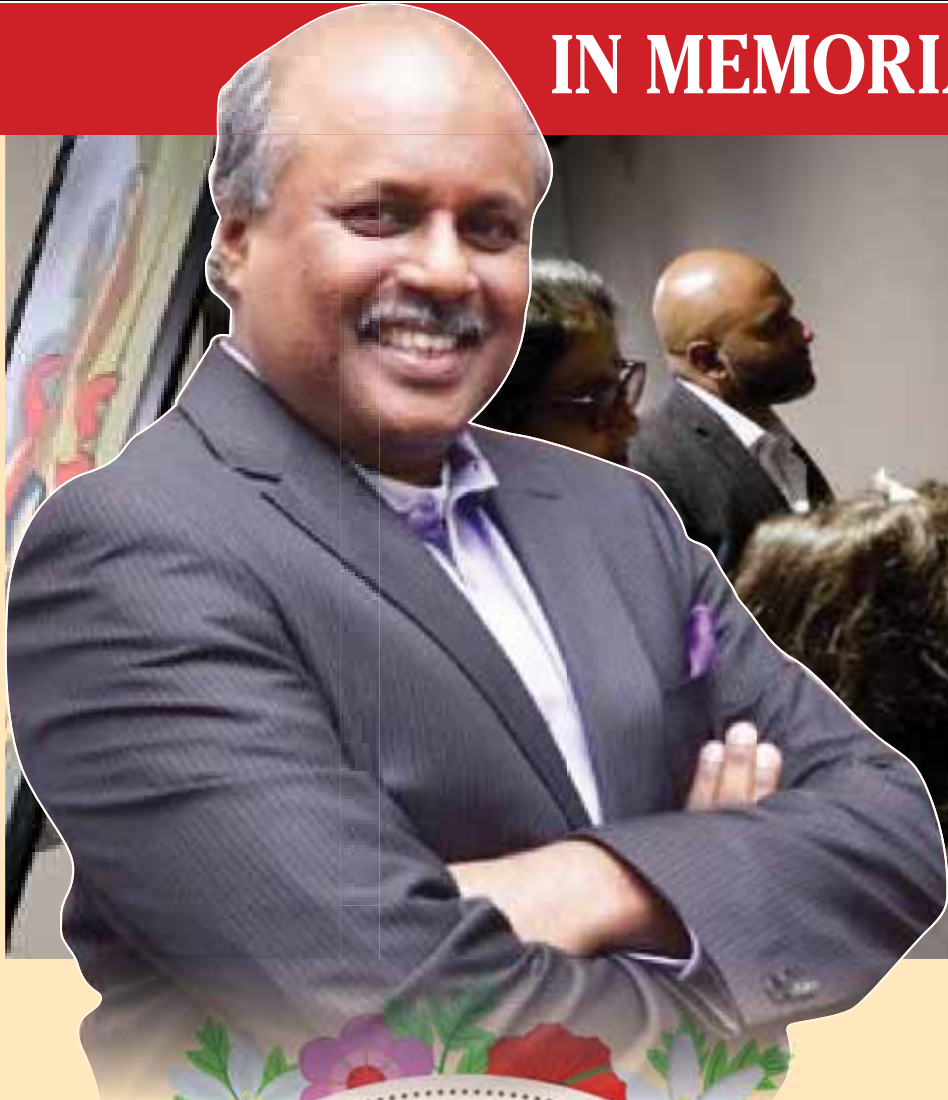
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Tribute

IN MEMORIAM OF KARUNA VINCENT



Monsoon Journal extends deepest sympathies to the family members, friends and many well wishers in the field of art on the recent passing away of Karuna Vincent.

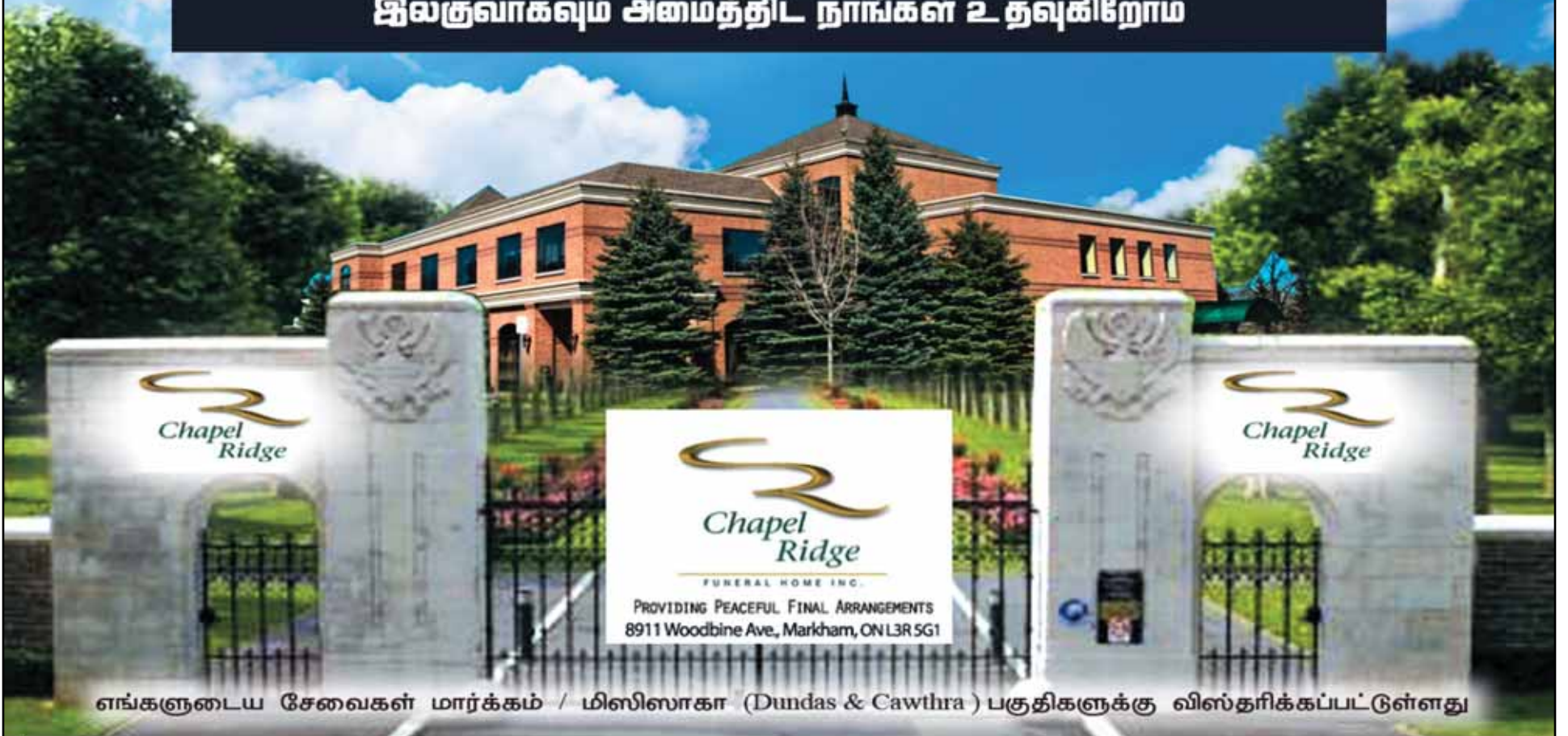
Karuna Vincent may have left the earth but his works of art is here for eternity.

Out of the thousands of outpouring messages of condolences in the social media hearing the demise of Vincent, a collection is presented here in tribute to the talented artist:



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BEATING THE RED LINE

(That pinpoints latecomers)



C. Kamalaharan

“Sorry Meena, this morning I didn’t purposely leave you behind and took off all of a sudden,” said Kumar. “What sorry! It was a real humiliation in public, I couldn’t face them.” “Very sorry Meena, I didn’t mean to hurt you,” Kumar said politely. “Stop your explanation I was an object of ridicule, everyone was laughing at me,” she yelled. Continuing she said, “How can I walk along the road hereafter, you have shattered our twenty years of marriage life for a split second and vanished.” “Really sorry I was in such a hurry to reach school on time and beat the red line.” “You and your redline I can’t forgive you for your stupid behaviour and unreasonable explanation.” Unable to convince her, Kumar moved away and retired into his room.

It was as usual a hectic day for both of them as they had to hurry up and reach school sharp at 8.30 a.m. It was also an important day for them as they had to conduct the annual promotion test. Having packed up their children to school much earlier this tensed couple after attending to their household chores locked the door leaving everything inside in disarray and took off to a flying start in their scooter. Their immediate concern was to reach school on time and beat the red line that pinpoints latecomers.

Both the teachers were serving in different schools five kilometres apart. The lady teacher perched precariously on the pillion with her arms around his waist had to alight first at her school gate while her husband had to proceed

further in double speed along the long stretch to beat the red line. The principal of his school an eccentric is always right on spot at the attendance register stand sharp at 8.30 am to draw the red line. Even when he was aware of the teachers hurrying through the main gate no mercy was shown particularly to those who were uncooperative. But the teachers took things lightly and were not at all bothered about his vindictive behaviour.

It so happened on that particular day they faced an unexpected setback for the first time. The gate at the usual rail crossing was closed due to the late arrival of the mail train from Colombo. It usually passes the rail crossing at 6.00 am. But on that day a serious accident occurred at an unprotected rail crossing causing the delay. Both of them were contemplating reversing and taking another route. But will the new route help them to beat the redline! So they decided to wait till the train passed the rail crossing.

To ease herself she got down from the rear seat and stood engaging in silent prayer. But Kumar continued to be seated with his left foot resting on the ground and his right hand tightly gripping the lever of the accelerator.

When the resounding sound of the approaching train was heard at a distance they were jubilant as their hope of beating the redline revived. He kick started the engine and remained in the get set position to take off. No sooner the gates were opened he took off with the engine at full throttle completely forgetting his wife who was left stranded. He zigzagged

through the milling crowd uttering something probably to his wife whom he thought was seated behind. At her school gate the scooter automatically screeched to a halt. “Hurry, get down and go,” he said. The absence of any response from her made him realise his folly. “Let her walk to school, it’s only a short distance,” saying so he sped fast, swearing to the right and left dogging everything that came his way.

Thoroughly disgusted Meena walked fast in a fit of rage towards the school. Being deserted by her hubby and made her a laughing stock in the eyes of the onlookers she hurried through the main gate rushed to the office and to her dismay found the redline had already been drawn. “Had he transported me in his scooter I would have beaten the redline,” she fumed. The recurring thoughts of being beaten unfairly by the redline and her husband’s absent-mindedness spoil her concentration while conducting classes.

Kumar continued at top speed every now and then glancing at his wrist watch hoping to beat the redline. At the entrance he dashed through the main gate parked his bike and rushed towards the attendance register stand to find the redline had already beaten him. Thoroughly disgusted over his vain attempt to beat the redline, facing the wrath of his principal for being late and above all leaving his wife stranded at the rail crossing. He spent the day not able to concentrate in anything and returned home to receive a ‘warm’ welcome from his wife.



Signs of Romantic LOVE



- stylecaster.com

By: *Jesudason John Aputharajah*

***“Ethilar pola pothunokku nokkal,
Kadalar Kanne ula”***

Only lovers are experts at camouflaging their looks, as if they are strangers to each other. Valluvar appears to be an adept at the psychology of love and romance and he expressed them very clearly in his couplets two thousand years ago. A loving lass shoots out two kinds of looks-one torments and the other provides soothing balm for that pain.

The brief furtive glance of a lovelorn

lady is that when he is not looking, it is the better part of the love that unfolds between them. Emerson asserted that one of the most wonderful things in human nature is a glance that transcends speech. It is the bodily symbol of absolute identity/mutual feeling.

The loving lass looks and then bows her head in modesty; these are the symptoms she designs to nourish the love for her loved one. When the lover looks, the loving lass does not direct her eyes on him. Her joyous smile indicates that she is looking through the

corner of her eyes.

The eyes of a loving lass speak as offended strangers. However, her love is seen through in an instant. Though seemingly unfriendly, the pretended looks as an offended person are signs of love hidden in the heart.

The tender looks of a lover melts her heart and raises hopes so much so that she smiles softly and gracefully in response. Where the eyes have reached an understanding between themselves, words of the mouth become quite superfluous.

***“Kannodu kanninai noikin vaichchotkalal,
Enna payanum ila”***

(Kural: 1091-1100)



Valluvar's Views



Canadians Deserve 21st Century Ethnic TV Channels like OMNI once served us well! What we're offering is a huge leap forward.

By Slava Levin and
Hari Srinivas

.....

If you have a VCR in 2019, it's likely gathering dust on a shelf. There's nothing wrong with it. It still does the same job it always did. But today we live in a streaming, on-demand world. The relentless drive of progress has turned your perfectly good VCR into a museum piece.

That's how innovation works. It disrupts. Sometimes, that disruption can be messy. But it gives us solutions that actually meet customers' needs. And they will take the better option every time, by voting with their feet – and their pocketbooks.

Both of us understand this very well. We're innovators and entrepreneurs. We thrive on bringing new ideas to our customers. Through our company, Ethnic Channels Group, we pioneered delivering television signals over the internet (IPTV) years before Bell and Rogers introduced Fibe and Ignite.

From our headquarters in Markham, we use IPTV to deliver multi-ethnic programming faster and at lower cost than many people in the industry ever thought possible. Today, Ethnic Channels Group is the largest distributor of multi-ethnic television in Canada. Our technology is the backbone of the ethnic television packages offered by Rogers, Bell and Shaw. Without us, Canadians would not have the ethnic television choices available to them today.

So, we know ethnic television. We understand the crucial role it plays in helping new Canadians integrate and succeed in this country while maintaining a connection to where they're from. And new Canadians aren't just an important audience, they're a large one: equivalent to the population of Quebec. For all those reasons, we strongly believe that now is the time to take ethnic television in Canada to the next level.

For years, Canadian television consumers have only really had one multilingual television brand to choose from: OMNI. OMNI Television broadcasts third-language (in other words, non-English or French)



programming across Canada under a mandatory-carriage license. That means that every cable and satellite provider in Canada carries it, and every customer gets it. You could say OMNI TV is omnipresent.

There's no question that OMNI has played a groundbreaking role in delivering television to a multiethnic audience over the past several decades. But OMNI is based on an outdated model. Programs in languages like Cantonese, Mandarin and Punjabi get preferential, prime-time placement on OMNI's schedule. Other languages get relegated to off-hour timeslots and lesser airtime.

Today, OMNI is just like your old VCR in our on-demand, streaming world. It still does the job it was designed to do. But is there a better option?

The issue is up for discussion today because — right now — the CRTC is considering new applications for the mandatory-carriage license now held by OMNI's owner, Rogers. To be fully transparent — we have submitted

our own application for that license, for a new service called Voices.

Voices is unlike any kind of multi-ethnic television service Canadians have ever seen — or heard. It will deliver multi-ethnic programming in ten languages, through simultaneous translation, for 55 hours a week. The languages will be chosen based on what the data tells us are the ten most-spoken third languages in Canadian homes. And ten is just in the first year — the number of languages carried on Voices will grow to 25 after three years.

Voices is built on the same technology that CBC uses to broadcast Hockey Night in Canada in Punjabi. Indian broadcasters have delivered a similar service for years now. What we're proposing isn't a radical technological change. It's just a more effective use of tools we already have to create a better viewing experience for Canadians — have one of the most diverse viewerships in the world. It is a viewership that is, in our view and the view of many others, being

underserved by the status quo.

Our competitors don't want to change the way we deliver multi-ethnic television. If it isn't broken, they'd argue, why fix it? Frankly, that's an argument VCR manufacturers would have agreed with. History shows us that Canada's major media companies do not embrace change.

As entrepreneurs and innovators, we thrive on change. We embrace it, and pursue it relentlessly, because change is how we drive progress. And in the end, it is Canadian television viewers who benefit. As broadcasters privileged with work in this great country, under license from the Federal government and on behalf of the Canadian people, delivering the best possible product is — and should always remain — our highest priority.

Slava Levin is the Chief Executive Officer of Markham-based Ethnic Channels Group. Hari Srinivas is the President. Learn more about Voices at www.voicestv.ca.





IDENTIFY AND PREVENT BULLYING



Anjahna Sakdivadivel with TDSB Trustee, Yalini Rajakulasingam

By: Anjahna Sakdivadivel

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Anjahna Sakdivadivel, and today I will talk about how and why bullying occurs, as well as some ways to stop it.

What is Bullying? According to a website, bullying is when an individual or a group of people with more power, repeatedly and intentionally causes hurt or harm to another person or group of people who feel helpless to respond.

There are 4 types of bullying – physical bullying, verbal bullying, social bullying, and cyber bullying. Physical bullying is when physical contact is involved. Verbal bullying is when abusive language is used. Social bullying is when gossip is spread to cause humiliation. Cyber bullying is abuse on digital platforms.

Bullying is now recognized as a widespread issue, and it is usually neglected in school around the world because it implies severe consequences for the bullies and the victims. This is an important issue that will not become solved until parents and teachers address the reasons why children humiliate and intimidate others in the first place. With the right guidance and training, children can acquire skills to work through their problems instead of managing them through bullying. In order to provide children with such education and successfully minimize and even eliminate bullying from schools, we need to determine its causes and effects that school bullying poses on children.

Children who bully often come from dysfunctional families. Of course, growing in such a family

is not an assurance that a child will become a bully. However, a significant number of children prone to becoming bullies come from families where little affection and devotion is shown. In such families, parents may often be an example of inappropriate behavior, such as aggressive acts towards friends, siblings or other members of the family. Therefore, children adopt such behavioral patterns and simulate it with their peers.

The effects of bullying are ubiquitous and extensive. From a mental point of view, bullying has a potential to severely impact a child's self-esteem even years after bullying has stopped. The victims of threats and intimidation are inclined to suffer from anxiety and depression, mainly if the harassment has occurred over the prolonged duration of action. Bullying can lead to psychological effects, such as low self-esteem, loneliness, and an increased potential to lapse into illness. These issues may persist into adulthood. It should be recognized that these mental impacts do not stop at the bullied, they also extend to the bullies. Those involved in prolonged and severe bullying of others experience a wide range of mental health, and academic and social problems.

There are many ways to stop bullying. The first way is to recognize and respond. We need to educate parents, staff, and students about taking bullying more seriously and how to recognize it. Secondly, we need to monitor places where bullying will most likely take place. For example, the cafeteria is a place where bullying commonly occurs. The third suggestion is to encourage bystanders to become upstanders. By doing so, we can reduce bullying.

Thank you for listening to my speech.



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LASER SKIN RESURFACING IS TO BEAUTIFY FACES

A Laser Resurfacing Method Has a Tremendous Influence on Results

By: Uthayan Thurairajah

What is laser skin resurfacing?

Laser skin resurfacing therapy is a kind of skin care method conducted by a dermatologist or physician. Laser skin resurfacing includes the removal of a paper-thin layer of skin that is replaced with new skin that is healthier. It improves texture, pore size, fine lines, pigmentation, and scars.

Depending on individual needs, a dermatologist recommends either non-ablative or ablative lasers. Ablative lasers include Erbium or carbon dioxide (CO2). CO2 laser resurfacing treatment is used to get rid of scars, warts, and deep wrinkles. Erbium is used for lighter wrinkles, lines, and other superficial skin concerns. Ablative lasers (both types) remove outside layers of the skin. Non-ablative lasers do not remove any skin layers but are used for rosacea, spider veins, and acne-related skin concerns. It includes pulsed light, pulsed-dye lasers, and fractional lasers.

Who should get this system?



If you have age, sun, or acne-related skin care concerns, this procedure is not treatable with over the counter (OTC) products. Laser skin resurfacing can be treated to the following skin concerns: scars, age spots, acne, fine lines and wrinkles, sagging skin, crow's feet, uneven skin tone, enlarged oil glands, and warts. Your original skin tone can define the best type of procedure. The lighter skin tone people are good candidates because they carry a reduced risk for hyperpigmentation.

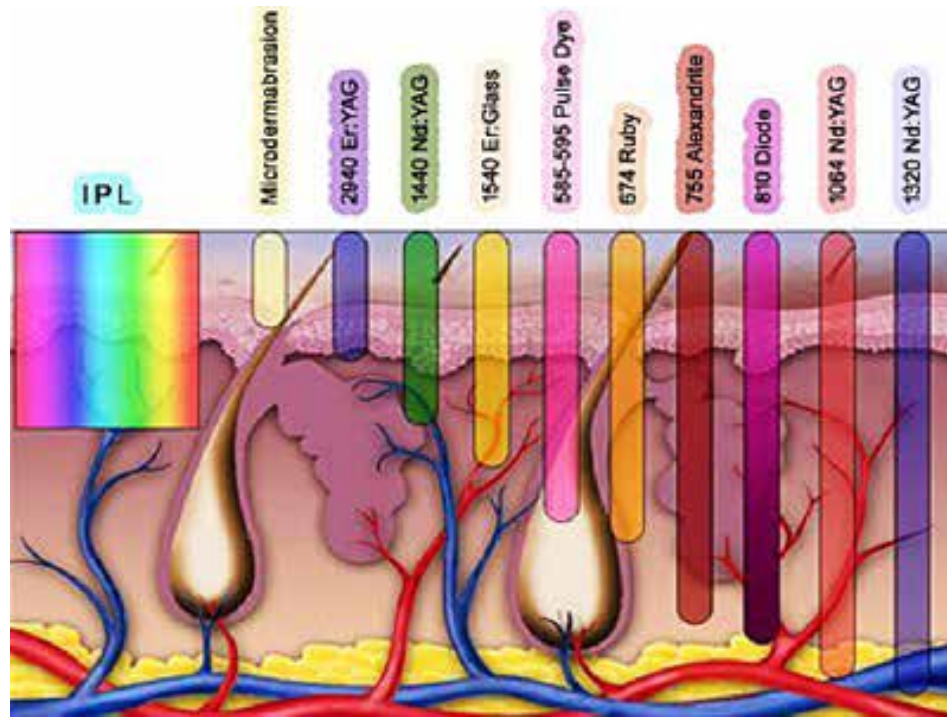
The American Board of Cosmetic Surgeons (ABCS) says that it is a misunderstanding that laser skin resurfacing is for light skin only. A dermatologist knows which types of lasers work best for darker skin tones (e.g., Erbium lasers). This procedure will not be suitable for people with active acne breakouts or excessive sagging skin.

ABCS advises getting this procedure done during fall or winter. It can help decrease sun exposure, which can damage sensitive skin.

What can we expect?

Laser skin resurfacing points the outer layer of your skin while concurrently heating the lower layers in the dermis. It will promote collagen production. Ideally, new collagen fibers will help produce new skin that is smoother in texture and firmer to the touch. The procedure involves the following steps:

- 1) Our skin needs to be prepared for before laser skin resurfacing. It means a list of treatments done several weeks before the procedure. The purpose is to improve our skin's tolerance for professional therapies. It can also decrease our risk of side effects.
- 2) the doctor will use a local anesthetic to the region being treated. It is used to reduce pain and make it more comfortable during the procedure. The doctor may suggest a pain killer if a large area of skin is being treated.
- 3) The skin surface is cleaned to remove any excess oil, dirt, and bacteria.
- 4) Next, the doctor begins the treatment, using the selected laser. The laser is

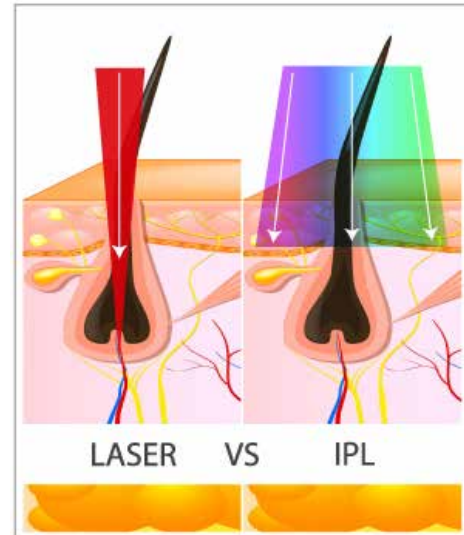


moved slowly around the designated area of skin.

5) Finally, your doctor will dress the treatment area in wraps to help protect the skin at the end of the procedure.

Possible side effects

Laser skin resurfacing does pose a risk for side effects such as Burning, bumps, rash, swelling, infection, hyperpigmentation, scars, redness and more. We can reduce the risk by following your doctor's pre-care and post-care instructions. Depending on the individual medical history, a person can be prescribed a precautionary antibiotic or antiviral medication. We need to talk to



our dermatologist about any medical conditions and all medications we take.

Laser resurfacing are not classified as surgeries. We can leave the doctor's office immediately following the procedure. Recovery is necessary to make sure our skin heals properly. Non-ablative laser treatments do not pose as great of a risk for side effects, but we may need multiple therapies to obtain desired results. Ablative laser treatments may correct our concerns in one treatment. Individual results vary and last for several years. However, the results are not permanent. We may need to repeat the procedure at some point.

How can we select a dermatologist?

Given the delicate nature of this procedure, it is necessary to work with an ex-



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.

training and knowledge in laser resurfacing with darker skinned patients.

Different lasers are optimized



There are many different laser options. One laser cannot treat all patients and all the skin problems. Here are a few types of lasers come across in my research:

- 1) CO2 Lasers are ablative lasers used to treat warts, scars, wrinkles and other lower skin flaws.
- 2) Erbium Lasers are ablative or non-ablative. They prefer collagen remodeling, making them popular options for treating fine lines, skin laxity, wrinkles, and age spots.
- 3) Pulsed-Dye Lasers are non-ablative lasers that heat the skin and absorb pigments to reduce redness, hyperpigmentation, broken capillaries, and rosacea.
- 4) Fractional Lasers can break up the energy into thousands of tiny beams to treat only a fraction of the skin in the area. Fractional lasers can be non-ablative or ablative and are used to treat some age-related blemishes.



perienced dermatologist. We can consider interviewing a few different dermatologists. Ask your dermatologist the following questions before booking a laser skin treatment:

- How much practice do you have with laser skin treatments?
- What is your expertise with my skin tone type?
- Do you have before and after photos from your clients?
- How my health affect after the treatments?
- Is there anything I need to do before the treatment?
- How many sessions will I need?
- What can I expect during recovery?

Focus on your goals: what skin problems do you want to address, and what results are you hoping for? Choose a laser resurfacing provider based on experience, training, and qualification—don't simply look for the best deal or the newest laser platform. It is also necessary to find a board-certified dermatologist. Certification ensures that we are working with a dermatologist who has extensive training and practice.

Darker skin and laser resurfacing

A common misunderstanding is that laser



resurfacing is safe for light skin types. It is true that some lasers pose a higher risk of discoloration or cell damage in darker skin. There are safe and effective resurfacing options. Black or darker brown skin may need to consider other skin resurfacing options, such as radio-frequency treatments or micro needling.

The excellent way to secure a safe, effective treatment for our skin type, we need to discuss with a provider who has extensive

5) IPL (intense pulsed light) therapy are not lasers but are used to treat the same as lasers, such as acne, rosacea, sun damage, and hyperpigmentation.

We can focus on individual goals: what skin problems do you want to address, and what results are you hoping for? The good news is we do not have to determine this on our own: a board-certified cosmetic surgeon or dermatologist or qualified skin care professional has laser resurfacing qualification, and experience will be able to advise the best treatment for us based on our skin type. Do not forget people say, "beautiful person does not need a recommendation."



MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Retirement: Myths and Realities

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

The retirement you choose will be unique to you, and that's as it should be – but in a general way, all retirements travel through three phases.

You've undoubtedly thought a lot about the "shape" of your retirement – but whether your plans include traveling, volunteering, starting a new career, or a myriad of other retirement dreams, the most important thing is having sufficient finances to ensure all of them become reality. If you are a member of a pension plan, now is the time to make some important decisions that will have a strong impact on the amount and length of your pension.

Phase 1: Figuring it out

Becoming retired is a change and while you might have dreamt about it, you really won't know what it will be like until you experience it. Much of who we are comes from work – our sense of accomplishment, our status and even our social connections – but the shift to retirement may mean figuring out who we truly are and learning how to be content through many retirement years. Before you retire, 'try on' different potential retirement lifestyles and chat with other retired friends about their retirement journey that may lead to discovering something new that you had not considered. Financially, you're likely to spend more during your early retirement years as you try out new things – so budget for these additional expenses but also remember that some fulfilling things (such as volunteering) are not expensive and provide a strong sense of self worth.

Phase 2: Settling in

At this point, you'll know exactly what you want out of retirement – and to be sure you'll enjoy it, always take care of your health. Financial planning becomes easier because most of your expenses are stable and predictable – but ensure you plan for the unexpected like a sudden health issue or major repair bill and periodically review your spending plan to ensure you've captured all your costs, including the effects of inflation.

Phase 3: Winding down

In this phase, folks usually slow down due to declining health or finances. You'll find yourself thinking more and more about the financial and other legacies you'll leave.

Do what you can to maintain and improve your health – but be aware that health care costs can be significant. Although Canada's health care program is very good, you'll likely want

to enhance your control over your own health – so be sure to understand your health care options and choices, especially what would happen if you become chronically or acutely ill.

These three phases of retirement aren't necessarily linear – for example, if a significant health event led to retirement, you may live for a time like you're in Phase 3 but with recovery, move back to Phase 1. And keep in

mind that your spouse may not always be in the same phase as you.

Myths and realities

Whether your retirement is just around the corner or way down the road, you probably think about it – the shape of it, the quality of it – and perhaps worry about it, too. That's why you plan for retirement – to eliminate as many unknowns as possible and to chart the right retirement course for you. But every solid plan needs a solid foundation. The good news is that in this electronic age, there's lots of information out there. The bad news is there's also a lot of misinformation out there. So to give your plan the solid foundation it needs, let's dispel some myths and look at some basic realities of retirement.

Myth: Financial health is most important

Reality: Sure, having money definitely provides additional choices in retirement but the reality is that people tend to 'right-size' their retirement lifestyle in line with their financial resources. As well, many people enjoy fulfilling and meaningful retirements without having lots of money – by vol-

unteering, through part-time work, or other appropriate lifestyle choices. The biggest issue is your health – poor physical or mental health removes choices whether you have money or not. So your plan should include maintaining and improving your health and knowing how health issues will be handled before they happen.

Myth: The biggest risk to your retirement income is the stock market

Reality: Yes, poor investment returns early in retirement can have an impact, but avoiding the stock market by sheltering your investments in low-return vehicles such as Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs) may not be the answer. Unlike GICs, equity investments can provide the opportunity for the level of growth over the long term that can offset the effects of inflation. So, your plan should include strategies for accessing market growth while still protecting your income from the impact of a short term market turnaround.

Myth: You'll have plenty of spare time.

Reality: Experienced retirees will tell you that they have little spare time.

Life tends to expand to fill up time so your plan should ensure your time fills up with things that are meaningful to you.

Myth: People work in retirement because of financial need.

Reality: Some people do work in retirement for financial reasons but many seek part-time, occasional or flexible work that provides social interaction, allows them to feel challenged, or provides a sense of accomplishment. So plan to talk to 'working retirees' about why they work and how they fit their retirement around it.

To eliminate all the retirement myths from your retirement realities, talk to your professional advisor about the best retirement plan for you.

Disclaimer:

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



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HOW TAXES WORKS IN CONSUMER PROPOSAL?

Do you want to get rid of debt? In that case if you are getting a fixed income a consumer proposal can be the best option than getting into bankruptcy. The consumer proposal would help safeguard your assets and clear your debts to unsafe creditors.

The consumer proposal helps the interest increasing on the debt, halts collection calls and halts wage trimming. Under a consumer proposal you can easily pay off a less and small part of the total debt you have with the help of a single monthly payment during a span of 5 years or lesser than that. You can pay it anytime.

Let us understand what does consumer proposal mean?

It is an alternate option to bankruptcy created for those who are unable to pay off their debts to the unsecured creditors. You can create a new agreement with the help of Licensed Insolvency Trustee with the creditors to pay off lesser amount.

The monthly debts amount that you must pay is completely based on the income you get and the amount that you can manage to pay as a debt payment.

The consumer proposal proves to be an ideal option for all those who are engaged in the process.

Type of debts that consumer proposal covers are

All the unsecured debts that you own are taken care of by the consumer proposal. It includes utility bills that are not paid, debt related to credit card, payday loans and also the amount you owe to Canada Revenue Agency. The consumer proposal is meant for all the debts below \$250,000 (excluding mortgage). In case the debt amount is above \$250,000 then you are entitled for the proposal – Division 1. You can visit gtacredit.com to get rid of debt with the help of a consumer proposal.

How Taxes work in a consumer proposal?

Well, if you are planning to file your tax returns then it can be a cumbersome task if you are under debts or planning to file a consumer proposal. There are lot of misunderstandings regarding the taxes you pay upon filing a consumer proposal and you may get in trap of such misunderstandings as taxes are handled differently when it comes to consumer proposal rather than a bankruptcy.

The best source to get all your mis-



understanding clear about your taxes is to seek help from GTA CREDIT counsellor or an Insolvency Trustee and you will get all the answers to your questions about your financial status and what exactly the consumer proposal have in store for you. The trustee helps you all through the process of consumer proposal for example, your assets, taxes, credit rating etc.,

There are some basic things that you should be aware of about how the taxes work while filing a consumer proposal.

In case of bankruptcy you will need to cease the tax refund same as you would pay a portion of your income as part of legacy or any increment in your salary. On the other hand, the consumer proposal acts differently. You agree on certain payment terms with your creditors wherein you set a fixed amount to be paid on a monthly basis over a time span of 5 years. The agreement will not alter until and unless you choose to replace it with a new agreement that includes a quick rate for paying back the debt amount. The basic idea behind why a person should seek help via consumer proposal is to secure his/her increments in income in near future.

Do you need to file taxes while seeking a consumer proposal?

It is recommended that you file the taxes while seeking a consumer propos-

al as if you miss filing taxes it could intervene in your agreement. In case of a bankruptcy you need to file pre-as well as post-bankruptcy tax return.

When you opt for a consumer proposal or bankruptcy it is always better to seek credit counselling. The credit counselling help you plan your credit and use it wisely and stay away from debt in coming years.

You can get detailed information from the gtacredit.com or trustee as they help you create a consumer proposal and file the consumer proposal for you. They try to negotiate the amount with your unsecured creditors, so they act like intermediaries between both you and the unsecured creditors.

They also help you learn how to utilize your credit and provide tailored counselling for dealing with your credit in near future. They make sure that the agreement rules are followed by both the parties.

There are benefits linked to consumer proposal and they are

- No need to file bankruptcy
- Can protect your assets
- The unsecured creditors will halt any collection actions that they take against you.
- Any of the deductions on your bank accounts or wages will be cancelled.
- You can pay even lesser amounts to the unsecured creditors as payback amount. This entirely depends on how

much you can pay based on your income. All these payment terms are taken care of while filing consumer proposal.

• Once you file consumer proposals there will be no penalties or increased interest rates for you to pay.

The consumer proposal doesn't include any disbursement of your assets like vehicles or house etc. in case you mortgaged your house then you need to pay the required amount to protect your house. The same applies to car or any other secured loans. Remember, secured debts like car loans, home loans or mortgages are not taken care of in consumer proposals.

Upon completion of your consumer proposal you are freed from all unsecured debt payments that are included in consumer proposal. Basically, the debt amount that you are supposed to pay in consumer proposal is quite less as compared to the debt amount you owe.

Consumer proposal can help you with debts and you won't find land in a situation where you find yourself under debts and it becomes impossible to overcome such situations. Any help for financial problems visit www.gtacredit.com or call Mark at 416-489-2000.

Please see page 2 for GTA Credit Ad with more details and contact information.



The Jaffna Tamil Cook Book

Author: Nesa Arumugam

Reviewed By

Siva
Sivapragasam

“The Jaffna Tamil Cook Book” authored by Nesa Arumugam is an exhaustive description of the traditional food recipes of the Jaffna Tamil people and written with the Tamil Diaspora in mind and memories to be passed down to generations through food. The Tamils no doubt love their cuisine and often relish the family recipes wherever they live.

The author admits that the recipes are not her own but belong to the community and Tamil heritage and have been passed down from generation to generation. The author’s hope is that the recipes in the book will be passed down from the home kitchen to kitchens everywhere. Since thousands of Tamils of Jaffna origin have migrated to distant parts of the world, this book containing the recipes of the traditional tasty and nutritious food items will no doubt be a valuable cookery handbook for the expatriate Tamil community, specially to the younger generation and generations to come. The book will no doubt be appreciated by our community beyond the shores of the Jaffna peninsula.

The recipes contained in the book are based on vegetables, lentils and other ingredients laying emphasis on the nutrition and health



The Jaffna Tamil Cookbook

compiled and edited by
Nesa Arumugam

benefits of these ingredients used in making the relevant food items. Cooking these items is made easier by the author as she gives a step by step procedure and methods in cooking them. The author has taken considerable time and energy to prepare recipes of a variety of dishes that are unique to the Jaffna people.

The contents of the book are conveniently divided into breakfast dishes, rice dishes,

vegetable dishes, chutneys, meat food, soups, pickles, sweets and desserts, along with a variety of drinks too. She has also added a section to include the making of curry powders which give Jaffna dishes a unique and special taste.

The Tamils of the Northern and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka have learnt and practised a unique cuisine over the years from their elders and these recipes deserve to be known to the present generation and to generations to come. The author has dutifully achieved this through her book which contains hundreds of recipes and will certainly earn the appreciation of those who use this book as a handy guide to know about the cuisine and food recipes of the Jaffna Tamils.

Proceeds from the sale of books authored by Nesa Arumugam go to support women and children’s livelihood and empowerment projects.

This Book (“The Jaffna Tamil Cook Book”) is in support of Avvai Home in Chennai.

For information on how to purchase the book, please email the author:
nesa1512@gmail.com



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*A dance ensemble production by
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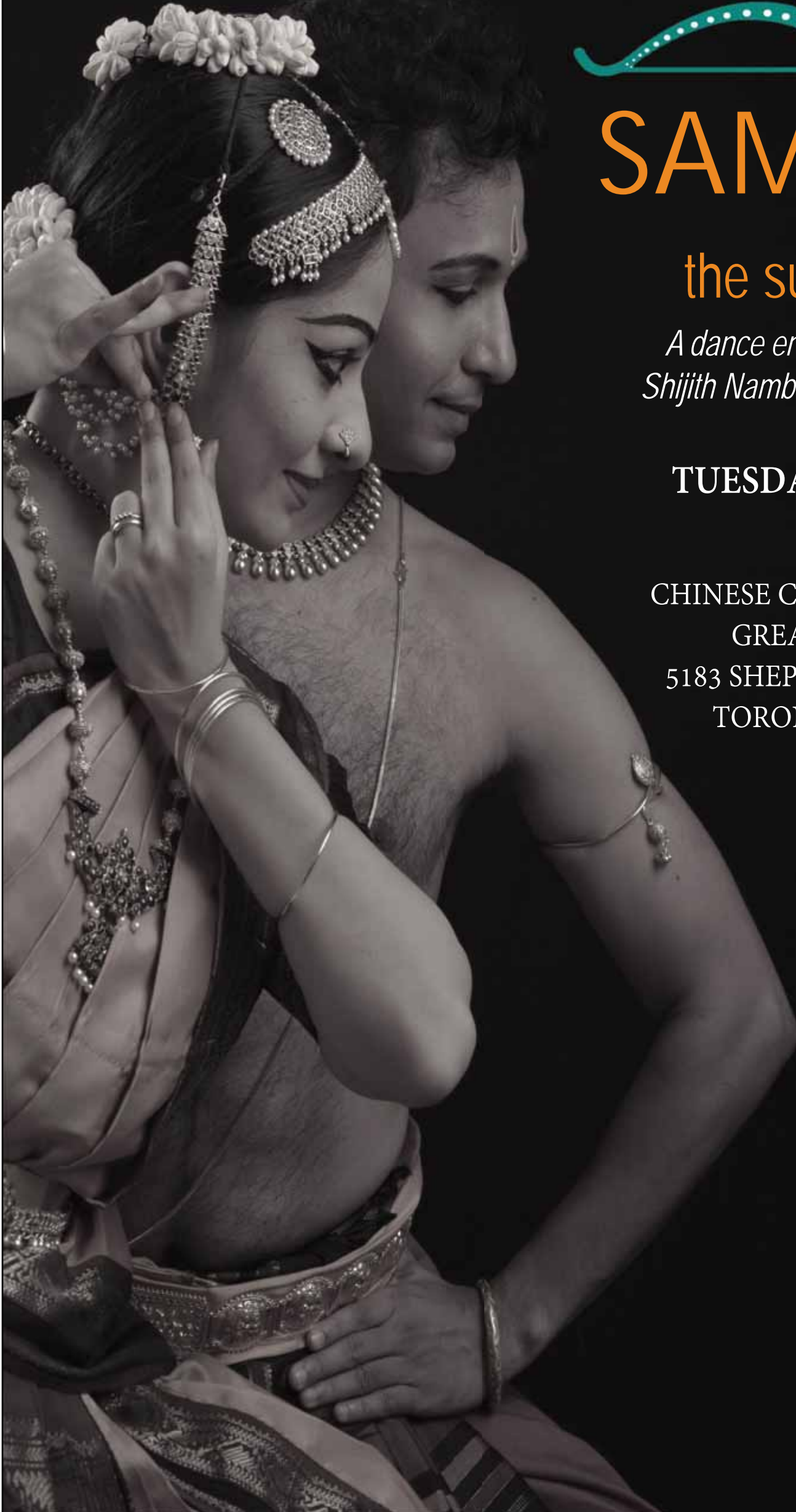
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GENIE SISTERS
**SAMAYAL
SANTHAI**


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!

Sweet stuffed Idly

Which do you like the most? Idly or dosai? What about stuffed idly? Sound different? Here is a recipe for you to try; it combines the delicious lightness of idly with a sweet filling that will definitely have you stuffing yourself with idlys. #punintended

Ingredients:

- ✓ Prepared idly batter (idly maavu) you could use the pre-packaged wet idly batter
- ✓ 3 small cubes of dark jaggery (vellum)
- ✓ 2/3 cups desiccated coconut (thengai)
- ✓ ¼ tsp of cardamom powder (elakkaipodi)
- ✓ 1 tsp gingelly oil (nallennai)
- ✓ Pinch of salt (uppu)

Method:

In a small pan on low heat, add 1/3 cup of water and the jaggery cubes. When the jaggery has melted, add the salt and the desiccated coconut. Mix well and let the mixture slightly thicken, aim to evaporate as much water as you can. Add the cardamom powder and the mixture is ready.

In an idli cooker, line each tray with a drop of gingelly oil and cover less than half of the idly well with batter. Spoon some of the jaggery-coconut mixture in the middle, making sure to spread it evenly. Top the mixture with some more idli batter, ensuring that all the mixture is covered. Cook the idlis for 10-12 minutes and serve hot.

Makes an ideal healthy treat for kids and is perfect for snack boxes too.

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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Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars raised for Toronto University Tamil Chair through Villupaatu performance

Total funds raised so far close to \$900,000



By Siva Sivapragasam

In their untiring efforts to raise funds to create a Tamil Chair at the University of Toronto to preserve and celebrate the richness of the Tamil Language and Literature across Canada and around the world, the organizers of the Tamil Chair had successfully raised \$ 65,000 in a “Villupaatu” performance held recently in Toronto.

“Villupattu” is an art form of storytelling with music interludes practised in the villages of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka that keep the villagers mesmerized and entertained with stories and songs.

The Villupattu performance that took place in Toronto on March 9th, 2019 was organized by MACA and performed by a prominent Toronto Tamil artist Dr. Varadarajan Raghuraman. This art form which was initially was practiced in the villages of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka and over time became a more integral part of village life with performers routinely entertaining villagers with stories and songs as they struck the strings of a bow with two sticks, creating a unique rhythmic accompaniment.

This form of storytelling is just one of the many cultural and artistic endeavours that the Canadian Tamil community is hoping to protect and study with the establishment of a Tamil chair at the University of Toronto. The organizers behind the establishment of the Tamil chair at the UTSC want to make sure that the literature and language of the Tamil people is preserved, celebrated and cherished across the country and around the world.

In June 2018 the UTSC and members of the Tamil community announced the drive to create a Tamil

chair and fund it through a community endowment. It is the first time an ethnic community and the University of Toronto have signed such an agreement. The Tamil community needs to raise \$3 million over the next two year to fund the chair. On the night of the event about \$65,000 was raised making the total donations and pledges close to \$900,000.

“Language is an integral part of the Tamil identity,” stated Sivan Ilangko, director of Tamil Chair Inc. “A Tamil chair in a university means establishing one’s identity.”

“The people of the world deserve to know the philosophical depth and literary beauty of the Tamil language,” said Varadarajan Raghuraman, director of Tamil Chair Inc. and a Villuppattu performer. “It is only possible by establishing a chair in a well-known university such as the University of Toronto.”

Currently, there are about 300,000 Tamils in Canada and an estimated 80 million around the world. Tamil literature and poetry have been in existence for more than 2000 years. “It is important to create a Tamil Chair at UTSC to allow the pursuit of studies and research in Tamil and its literature as well as to create global recognition for the classical language,” said Appadurai Muttulingam, Director of Tamil Chair Inc and a well-known Tamil writer in his own right.

“Tamil is an ancient language,” said Muttulingam. “Villuppattu is an ancient form of storytelling with musical interludes. It is fitting that this art form is chosen to tell the story of immigrant people, their struggle to find an identity and in the end, finding solace in creating a Tamil chair at the University of Toronto.”

Contd. from page 1

Government of Canada to Fund...



“Canadians across the country are coming up with innovative and affordable solutions to increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions, saving people money and creating good jobs along the way. By investing in these projects, from coast to coast to coast, the Government of Canada is making sure we are positioned to succeed in the \$26 trillion global market for clean solutions and to create good middle class jobs today and for the future.”

– Gary Anandasangaree,

Member of Parliament for Scarborough-Rouge Park

The Partnerships stream, valued at \$50 million, was launched on December 20, 2018, and is targeting smaller applicants, including small businesses, not-for-profit organizations, smaller municipalities, and Indigenous communities and organizations.

Dave Borins is the Director of Community Renewable Energy Projects at Bullfrog Power. In this role, he helps Bullfrog Power provide funding to non-profits, First Nations, co-ops and municipalities who are building wind, solar and run of river hydro projects across Canada. Borins has had a varied career as a wilderness canoe, guide, touring singer/songwriter, bandleader, teacher and he describes himself as a general enthusiast.

Daniel Bida is a Chartered Financial Analyst that spent the first 6 years of his career as an energy analyst before leaving that behind to pursue the development of community-owned biogas projects. Daniel is passionate about food, energy and the environment, and is motivated by opportunities to turn waste into value for these industries

and for local communities.

Dolf DeJong is the CEO of the Toronto Zoo, and has held many leadership positions that significantly contributed to conservation and engagement with our natural world. Some of his career highlights have included Vice President and General Manager of Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre, Director of Biodiversity Programs at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, and Park Area Manager at Conservation Halton. Both professionally and personally, Mr. DeJong demonstrates a strong commitment and passion for initiatives and projects that support long-term solutions aimed at restoring and protecting natural habitats and the species that call them home.

Gary Anandasangaree is the Member of Parliament for Scarborough – Rouge Park and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, the Honourable Pablo Rodriguez where he oversees the development work pertaining to Anti-Black Racism, Indigenous Languages and Multiculturalism.



Obituary Notice



— Dr. Mrs. Kalaivanees Pillai —

Dr. Mrs. Kalaivanees Ukiraperuvaluthipillai (also known as Dr. Mrs. Pillai), a dedicated Medical practitioner passed away peacefully in Maharagama, Sri Lanka, on Friday February 15th, at the age of 71.

Dr. Mrs. Pillai also affectionately called as Dr. Mrs. Valuthy worked at various hospitals in Sri Lanka including the cancer hospital at Maharagama where she served for many years until her recent passing away.

Dr. Mrs. Pillai was the eldest daughter of late Mr. Kanapathypillai Thalayasingham (Retired Station Master) of Kantharmadam and Mangayathkarasi Thalayasingham of Manipay and was the dearly beloved granddaughter of late scholar/writer N.C. Kandiahpillai of Kantharodai and Ratnam of Manipay.

Dr. Kalaivanees was the loving daughter-in-law of late Mr. Kandiahpillai Ramanathapillai (Retired Principal) and Selvavathyamma of Puloly.

Kalaivanees was the dearly beloved wife of late Dr. Ukiraperuvaluthipillai and was the affectionate mother of Dr. Banugopan (Colombo), Bharath (Engineer, Canada) and Senthoran (Health Care Officer, Canada).

Dr. Kalaivanees was the beloved sister of Arunthathy Thalayasingam (Legal Practitioner,

India), Indrani Sivaloganathan (Accountant, Canada), Sivakumar (Proprietor, Yoga Studio, South Africa), Chandrakumar (Proprietor Net Tek College, Canada), Sooriyakumar (London) and Mala Raveendran (Canada).

Late Dr. Kalaivanees was the loving sister in law of Dr. Selvakadunkoan (London), Late Dr. Miss. Avvaipillai (Sri Lanka), Selvamalar Ramanathapillai, (Sri Lanka), Alageswaran (Sri Lanka), and beloved aunt of Mrs. Nesarany Senthoran (Canada).

Late Kalaivanees was the sister in law of Priya Chandrakumar (Canada), Raveendran Thirunavukarasu (Canada), Late Sivaloganathan (Accountant Canada), and Mrs. Lyla Selvakadunkoan (London).

Funeral rites were held according to Hindu rituals and cremation took place at the Kottikawatta cemetery, Sri Lanka.

Relatives and friends are kindly requested to accept this information.

*For further details,
please Contact:*

Indra: 416-433-0491

Chandran: 416-595-7100

Senthoran: 416-351-8665



University of Jaffna Retired Professor Sivasuriya Passes Away

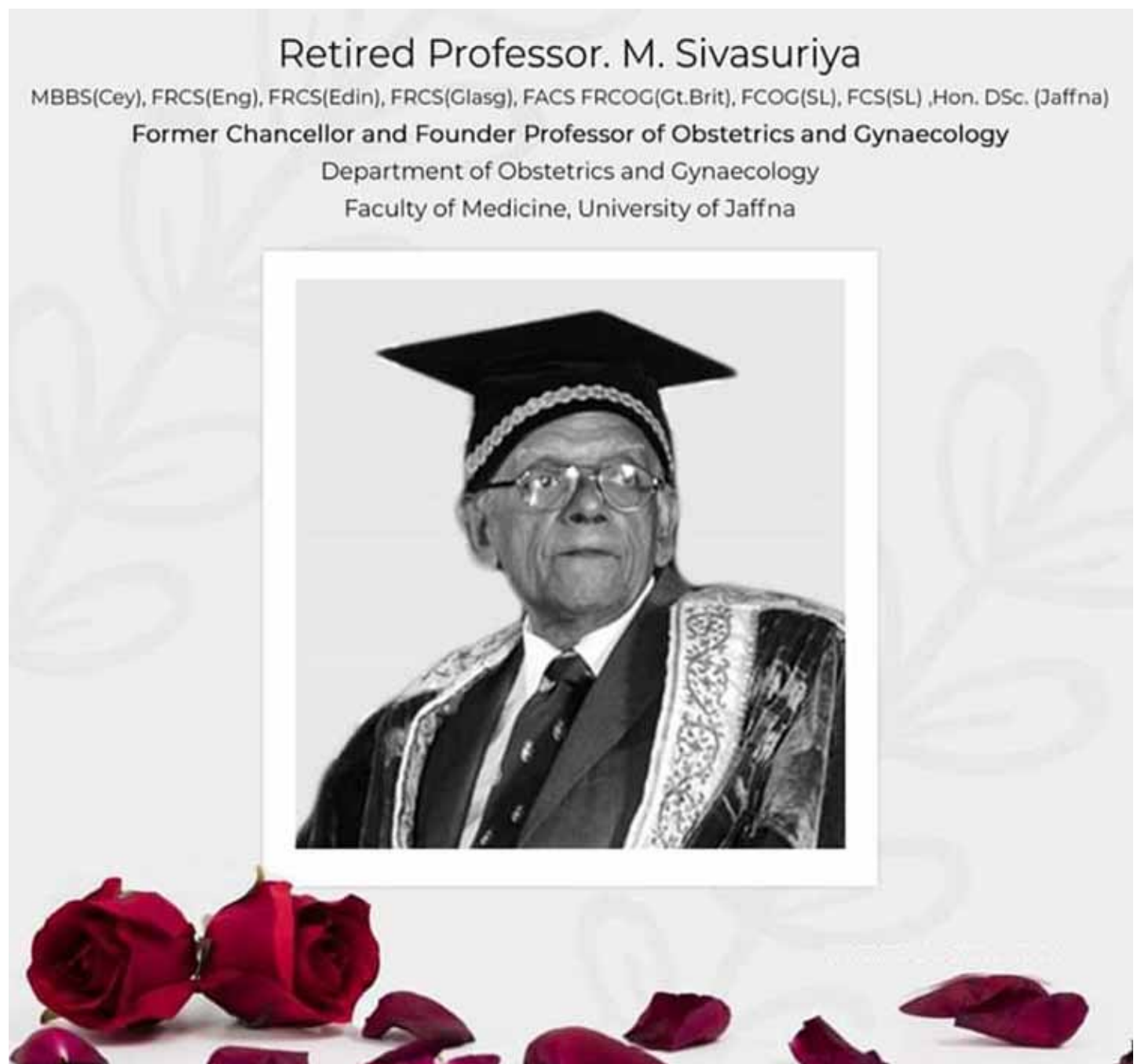
Gynecologist of repute with many qualifications to his credit

Veteran academic and educationist Professor Mailvahanan Sivasuriya (86) passed away on 26 February, 2019 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Professor Sivasuriya, was the former Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna and later was its Chancellor. A practising Hindu hailing from an orthodox Jaffna family, is one of the great personality in the history of the Faculty of Medicine at Jaffna University. Born on 20 April 1933 in Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia, was the only son of late Thambiah Mailvahanan of Moolai (an educationist in Malaysia) and late Maheswari Chellappa of Chulipuram; husband of Shanthi and father of Shivanthini (Adelaide) and Dr. Sivaganesh (Colombo) and brother of late Thavamalar, Sivamalar, Mahamalar, late Nagamalar and Ponmalar (all of Malaysia).

In 1948, teenaged Sivasuriya was sent for high school education in Sri Lanka under the care of his 'Mutha Annai' (cousin brother) late Thambiah of Moolai. On completion of schooling at Jaffna College, Vaddukodai, 'Mutha Annai' sent his cousin to live with his brother Dr. Nitchingam, who was a successful medical practitioner in Colombo, to follow pre-university classes at St. Joseph College. Under the care of 'Annai Mama' (loving cousin), young Sivasuriya excelled and in 1958, entered the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ceylon the only university in Sri Lanka (earlier Ceylon), where he received a MBBS degree.

On graduation as a medical doctor, Dr. Sivasuriya began his long career as a lecturer as one of the founding staff members of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya in 1962 now University of Peradeniya. In 1967 went to U.K. on sabbatical leave to complete his doctorate studies and returned with many qualifications to his credit. Sivasuriya is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, American College of Surgeons, Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Sri Lanka College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka.

After a brief period at the Medi-



Retired Professor. M. Sivasuriya

MBBS(Cey), FRCS(Eng), FRCS(Edin), FRCS(Glasg), FACS FRCOG(Gt.Brit), FCOG(SL), FCS(SL), Hon. DSc. (Jaffna)

Former Chancellor and Founder Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

cal Faculty at Peradeniya University, he decided to move to the Faculty of Medicine at University of Jaffna as the founder Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and served as Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Jaffna. As a successful medical practitioner he was offered many opportunities, yet based on principle opted not to do private practice during the time in government service, nor after retirement. That itself speaks volumes of his character of respecting the noble medical profession.

Prof. Sivasuriya, true to Albert Einstein saying "Only a life lived in the service of others is worth living" served tirelessly to help many young adults to graduate out of Jaffna University as

medical interns, especially during the a long stint at Jaffna University, that included the civil war years. Today many of them are serving as doctors in the country and around the world; many always fondly refer to their professor for his dedication to work, some remembering him for tirelessly cycling to work daily during the years of civil-war. On retirement, Prof. Sivasuriya moved to Colombo with his family, but was invited back by the University of Jaffna to serve as their Chancellor on an honorary capacity.

Prof. Sivasuriya is survived by his wife Shanthini and daughter Shivanthini and Dr. Sivaganesh. Irony is that this gentle scholar departed from this world on 26 February, the birth date of his loving cousin 'Annai Mama' (Dr. Nitchingam) with whom he lived for

seventeen long years during his student and medical career days. As the Professor wished a private cremation with family members present, his funeral took place on 28 February 2019 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

"We might not be the ones to change the world. We might not belong to the few that "put a ding in the universe. We might not be something the whole world would celebrate. But...In the little corners that we live; in the lives that we've played a part in, we should be nothing but unforgettable." — Nesta Jojo Erskine, Unforgettable: Living a Life That Matters and no doubt Professor Sivasuriya will be unforgettable to many.

Thamby Ramar



SAAC hosts 10th Annual Accountants Symposium

Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada (SAAC) is renowned for its professional development activities for its members and others in the accounting, finance and taxation fields. In the same initiative, SAAC had its 10th Annual Accountants Symposium on Saturday, March 2nd, 2019 at Courtyard Town Place & Town Palace suites, Markham. This was a full day professional development event and it included continental breakfast and an Italian style lunch. The event was a sold out event and well attended by over 150 accountants and finance professionals and business leaders. Please see below some of the pictures taken at event.





Government of India contributes to projects in Northern Sri Lanka



Feb 16, 2019:

With the financial support of the Consulate General of India in Jaffna, the Rotary Club of Jaffna in association with the Industrial Development Board of the Northern Province has organized an Exhibition cum Workshop for the Cottage and Small Scale Entrepreneurs at Veerasingham Hall in Jaffna from 16-17, February 2019. The programme is open to the public from 9 am to 4.30 pm on these days. Hon'ble NPC Chairman Mr.C.V.K. Sivagnanam and His Worshipful Jaffna Mayor Emmanuel Arnold jointly inaugurated the Exhibition in the presence of Consul General of India Mr.S. Balachandran, Governor's Secretary Mr. Elango van, Deputy Chief Secretary Ms. Meghanathan, Jaffna Rotary Club President Mr. Prasanthan, Jaffna Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Mr. Vignesh, NGO Council's Secretary, IDB officials, Rotary Club members from India and Jaffna, Consulate officials, Exhibitors, entrepreneurs and well-wishers. Over 13 companies from Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India have put up their machines on display with a live demonstration of the working of the machines. They will impart training to over 450 registered beneficiaries, mostly from women headed families in the next two days. The Rotary Club of Jaffna will assist the beneficiaries to acquire these machines at a subsidized price and also will help market the goods produced by them. Addressing the gathering, both Mr. Sivagnanam and Mr. Arnold praised the continuous assistance rendered by the Indian Consulate in Jaffna for the development of the Northern Province and urged the participants to shed their inhibitions, take benefit from the workshop and become self-reliant. Rotarian Prasanthan appealed to the beneficiaries to move from being aid-recipients to aid-givers through hard work.

March 5, 2019:

An amount of LKR 216,000 Grant in Aid from Ministry of Culture, Government of India was given by CGI, Jaffna to Kavinkalai Mandram Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts, University of Jaffna to organize the celebrations of Maha Sivarathiri at Keerimalai Naguleswaram Temple on 4th March 2019.

Governor of the Northern Province Dr. Suren Ragavan, Member of the Parliament Maavai Senathiraja, as well as Government officials, and around 4000 people attended the celebrations.



Feb 22, 2019:

With the grant of 2.15 lakhs provided by the Consulate General of India in Jaffna, the North Ceylon Oriental Music Society organized the 172nd Sadguru Thiyagaraja Swamigal's music Aradhana at NCOMS auditorium today (22nd February).



Feb 11, 2019:

The Northern Province Governor's representative His Worshipful Mr. Emmanuel Arnold, Jaffna Mayor inaugurated the India Education Fair at Hotel Valampuri this morning in the presence of Mrs. Vijayakala Maheswaran, State Minister for Education, as the special guest of honour. Mayor Arnold and Consul General Balachandran, among other speakers, addressed the gathering of over 300 participants. This is the first time, a private company, M/s. SAPE Events & Media Private Limited, Kolkata, in association with the Consulate General of India in Jaffna and the Education Ministry of the Northern Province organized the Fair in Jaffna. The Fair is open to the public from 10 am to 6 pm from today (11 Feb) until tomorrow (12 Feb) at Hotel Valampuri (first floor).

Compiled by *Kidambi Raj*

MAHA LAKSHMI LAKSHARCHANA

This year the Mahalashmi Laksharchana (repetitive chanting of Goddess's Names and attributes) one Lakh (100,000) times was celebrated for ten days starting on Sunday, February 10th and ending on Tuesday, February 19th. This was achieved by five priests chanting the 1,000 names once in the morning and again in the evening for 10 days.

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

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

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

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

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

Significance of performing the Laksharchana:

In all Hindu temples they perform Laksharchanas at least once a year to invoke Goddess Lakshmi and get her blessings for Peace, wealth, Health and Prosperity, not just for their devotees for people around the world. Particularly at the present times in this world Her Blessings are very badly needed.

About Goddess Lakshmi:

Goddess Lakshmi, the power and consort of Vishnu, the preserver, she is the power of



(bodily pleasures) and moksha (pinnacle of spiritual life). The lotuses in various stages blooming, represent the worlds and beings in various stages of evolution.

The Eight Divine Forms of Lakshmi:

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

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

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

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

Veera Lakshmi: She is depicted as eight-armed, wearing red silk, carrying chakra, shanku, bow, arrow, trishul (or sword) as her weapons, a bar of solid gold and the other two hands in Abhaya Mudra and Varada Mudra. She symbolizes bravery and strength.

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

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

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

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

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

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

As Vishnu represents all that is male, Lakshmi represents all that is female. In the company of Vishnu, she is shown with two hands only. When worshipped in a temple, as Lakshmi, she is shown seated on a lotus throne, with four hands holding Padma, shanku (conch), amritha kalasa (pot of ambrosia or nectar) and bilva fruit. Amritha Kalasa also signifies immortality. Sometimes, another kind of fruit, the *mahalinga* (citron) is shown instead of bilva. Her four hands signify her power to grant the four types of *purusharthas* (objectives of human beings), dharma (righteousness), artha (wealth), kama

Compiled by *Kidambi Raj*

MAASI MAHAM



Maasimaham:

Maasi Maham is an auspicious day in the Tamil month of Maasi (February -March). This year the MaasiMaham falls on Tuesday, February, 19th. It is an important day and annual festival for Tamilians around the world. Maham is one of the twenty seven stars (Nakshatras) in the Hindu astrological system. A major ritual on this day is the bathing of Temple Idols in sea, pond or lake.

This day is one of the most powerful Full Moons of the year, since the moon aligns with Maham, which is the birth star of Kings and Ancestors. This coincidence only occurs once a year and signifies the decent of heavenly beings to the earth plane. This alignment occurs only once a year and facilitates the decent or visit of heavenly beings to the earth plane. The divine beings appear in the astral form to purify their own karma of the human race. MaasiMaham combines the benefits of abundance and prosperity associated with the full moon and the majestic quality of the Maham star, offering a unique opportunity to gain power and energy. MaasiMaham is the most appropriate time to destroy our ego and surrender ourselves at the feet of the divine.

Rituals:

The main feature of the festival is the ritual bath given to the deities in the waters of "Theerthvaari" or Bay of Bengal. Early in the morning, a big colourful procession of devotees with the deities is organised from the temple to the sea shore, with the accompaniment of the auspicious Naadaswaram, a non-brass acoustic South Indian instrument, the temple idols, especially those of Lord Vishnu, Lord Siva and Sakhti, are given a ceremonial bath in the

waters of Theerthavaari.

As per the traditional ritual, the temple idols are given bath in the sea, pond or lake. Idols of gods and goddesses worshipped in the temple are carried in a big procession to seas, rivers or ponds. Poojas and rituals are performed and thousands of people participate on this auspicious event. In some temples, Gaja (gaja) pooja and or Ahwa (horse) pooja are also performed to bring riches and happiness for the devotees. Thousands of devotees take part in this holy ritualistic procession. The devotees also take bath in the sea or pond or lake with the strong belief that the holy waters washes away all the sins and help them attain moksha.

The MaasiMaham that occurs once in twelve yearshas even greater significance and is called MahaaMaham.

Significance:

On MaasiMaham day, there is a strong line up of other planets; Sun, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter. Moreover, Lord Sun, Mars and Moon are amplified in a Raja Yoga configuration. Jupiter is forming a beneficial time, infusing, wisdom, kindness and generosity. Saturn is strongly placed too. All these make the most powerful planetary waves creating opportunities for profound personal revolution on MaasiMaham.

The MahaaMaham is of very great importance at the AadiKumbheswaran temple in Kumbakonam, where there is a sacred Theerth (tank) here which is called MahaaMaham tank.

Why is so much importance given to water: Water is the medium the Universe uses to communicate with us. Our cells contain 75 to 90% of water. The cells have the ability to store and share information in particular photons

called bio-photons. They are the weak electromagnetic waves in the visible range of the light spectrum that our cells emit to control vital processes. DNA lies in the centre of every living cell and is surrounded by water. It contains instructions on how the cell should behave and replicate in the form of light or energy via the surrounding water. The energy from our DNA gradually expands out from the centre of the cell, spreading throughout the whole body via the water in our bodies. It extends beyond our physical bodies to the biophysical field due to the water molecules in the air around us. This is how, with the help of water, we and our energy field, interact and communicate with everything around us. The water in the Kumbakonam temple tank is said to be a mixture of water from the sacred rivers; Ganges, Yamuna, Saraswati, Sarayu, Godavari, Mahanadhi, Narmada and Kaveri. The water has been held as sacred and holy for thousands and thousands of years through their

very means of creation and by prayers and rituals of people since their beginnings. No matter their physical purity does to pollution etc., metaphysically or spiritually, they are pure and highly divinely charged.

The Special importances and significances of the month of Maasi:

- Lord Vishnu is said to have incarnated on MaasiMaham Day
- On MaasiMaham day, Goddess Parvati was born as a right sided Conch (ValampuriSangu) on a Lotus flower on the Kaalinth River
- MaasiMaham reinforces the significance of Annadhaanam (Feeding the people).
- Two Ekadasis that can cleanse even the Devils and Brahmahathi, fall in the month of Maasi.
- Initiation of higher education and research will be a great success, in the month of Maasi.
- Those who are not able to have a dip in any Holy river on MaasiMaham day, can instead read the MaasiMahaPuraanam or can listen to it and get the same benefit.
- People born on MaasiMaham are set to rule the world.



Durham Tamil Association celebrated Tamil Heritage Month and Thai Pongal Vizha

DTA celebrated this year's THM celebration at the Pickering Recreation Centre on Jan 19th, 2019. The event was filled with performances, food and booths to showcase the richness of the Tamil culture to other communities and the event was well attended with over 400+ guests including local and provincial elected officials. DTA also collaborated with the Monsignor John Pereyema Catholic Secondary School and DDSB Tamil Heritage Month Gala 2019.





DTA Seniors Computer Classes

Weekly Adults computer class conducted at DTA Center Unit 3 - 71 Station Road Ajax in partnership with the Ajax Library.



DTA provides Free Youth leadership club for Kids ages 7 to 17

DTA has dedicated and committed Youth Leadership Facilitators who conduct weekly classes. Students from these leadership clubs participate in events such as Toastmaster's YOUTH TALK and public speaking contest with the Royal Canadian Legion etc..

DTA takes pride as student Tharunika Gnaneshan received the award for best speaker for the Toastmasters club and Sayaani Konesapillai won 2nd place the public speaking contest with the Royal Canadian Legion. DTA thanks all the Leadership facilitators for their training and dedication.



The 2019 Ontario Parasport Games

Durham Tamil Association participated in the BE THE ROAR initiative. Durham Tamil Association was proud to adopt a team from Ottawa called the Ottawa Blind soccer team. They played at the day long Parasport Games at Pickering Soccer Club on Feb 9th & 10th. It was really inspiring for everyone involved.





India's Mammoth General Election Kicks Off April 11

By: Anjana Pasricha

NEW DELHI — India's general elections will be held over five weeks starting April 11 and decide if Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who won a sweeping victory five years ago, is able to secure a second term in office.

Billed as the world's largest democratic exercise, as many as 900 million voters will be eligible to choose 543 members of the country's lower house of parliament. The staggered election will be held in seven phases until May 19 and votes will be counted on May 23.

The elections pit Modi's rightwing Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party against the main opposition Congress party and an array of regional parties, some of who have formed alliances to challenge Modi.

While economic issues such as unemployment and farmers distress dominated the poll agenda until weeks ago, terrorism and national security have emerged as campaign issues after recent military skirmishes between India and Pakistan and could help Modi in his reelection bid as he projects himself as a strong leader.

Recent surveys say his popularity has risen since he ordered airstrikes inside Pakistan to target a militant camp following a suicide attack in Indian Kashmir.

Several polls held earlier this year had suggested that the contest would be close and the BJP, which suffered key defeats in state elections in December, would struggle to win an outright majority as it battles perceptions that its economic performance has been patchy.

In a series of tweets after the announcement, Modi hailed the festival of democracy, called on first time voters to vote in record numbers and touted his achievements. "We spent the last five years fulfilling basic necessities that were left unfulfilled for 70 long years. Now, time has come to build on that and create a strong, prosperous & secure India," he said.

VOA News



India's Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora (C) speaks as Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa (L) and Sunil Chandra look on during a news conference in New Delhi, India, March 10, 2019.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, center, is garlanded by BJP leaders on the first day of the two-day Bharatiya Janata Party national convention in New Delhi, Jan. 11, 2019.



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