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A Unified Toronto Raptors Makes History

By: Danesh Thirukumaran

Here comes Toronto. The recent success of the Toronto Raptors has put the city's passion for basketball in the spotlight, as many followers, old and new, begin to rejoice as the team reaches its first NBA Finals in team history. "Dr. James Naismith of Almonte, Ontario, probably never imagined how the sport would rally Canadians this spring when he invented it over 125 years ago," as said by the Library and Archives Canada.

It has been a long time coming, as the team has been eliminated the past three seasons at the hands of LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers, so it

seemed that it was time to make a change. Masai Ujiri, General Manager of the Raptors, traded away their best player arguably in their franchise history, DeMar DeRozan, to the San Antonio Spurs for Kawhi Leonard. This trade rattled the league as a superstar in DeRozan, who had given his all to the Raptors, was traded for Leonard who had much uncertainty surrounding him. This included an injury plaguing him for much of the 2017-2018 season, a disintegrated relationship with the San Antonio Spurs organization, the fact that he only had one year remaining in his contract,



Kawhi Leonard
(Facebook/Toronto Raptors)

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and lastly that he had expressed that he had no interest in playing with the Raptors. Masai Ujiri also fired the 2017-2018 coach of the year, Dwane Casey, and hired Nick Nurse who was an assistant during Casey's term as head coach. These blockbuster changes caused the NBA world to question Masai Ujiri's sanity, but as we can see today, it paid off, as they are playing in basketball's biggest stage.

The Raptors ability to play as a cohesive unit is what has allowed them to be a great team the past few years, but they were never able to get over the hump. The addition of Kawhi Leonard, a future hall of famer, allowed this team to surpass their previous achievements. His ability to create his own shot and pretty much score anywhere on anyone has led the Raptors to this position. However, other vital players cannot be discounted, as players like Kyle Lowry, who plays with a fire like no other, pushes this team to their limit. He instills confidence in those around him and performs the intangibles that makes a team a championship worthy one. Something can be said about each of the players on the roster, as they each play an imperative role on this team, which makes them so fun to watch.

The Raptors playstyle highlights the greatness of the sport, as they display that each player represents a necessary component of a well-oiled machine. The fluidity that they play with exhibits the beauty of basketball, which seems to increase its following by the minute here in Canada. The ability for many different skills and the passion that individuals can display as seen by these Raptor players emphasizes basketball's excellence.

Strolling through Toronto and many surrounding areas in Canada, it can be seen that people operate in their day to day activities with additional excitement, as this recent success of the Raptors has jolted the entire country.

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Ontario Passes Budget That Protects What Matters Most

Restores accountability, protects frontline services and reduces burdens on families and businesses

May 29, 2019 12:06 P.M.

TORONTO — Ontario's Government for the People has taken important steps in providing relief for families and businesses while charting a path to a balanced budget and protecting critical public services such as health care and education — without introducing any new taxes.

With the passage of Bill 100, the Protecting What Matters Most Act (Budget Measures), 2019, the government is implementing signature initiatives outlined in the 2019 Ontario Budget including:

- Creating the new Ontario Child-care Access and Relief from Expenses (CARE) tax credit — one of the most flexible child care initiatives ever introduced in Ontario. It is a plan that puts parents, not the government, at the centre of the child care decision-making process.
- Empowering municipalities to make rules about where alcohol can be consumed in public spaces, such as parks, and retroactively pausing a wine tax increase that was scheduled for April 1, 2019, leaving more money in the pockets of consumers.
- Introducing the Premier and Minister's Accountability Guarantee, which would require both the Premier and the Minister of Finance to give up 10 per cent of their premier and ministerial salaries for failing to make public financial and economic reports by the legislated deadline.
- Providing tax relief for families when they need it the most, as the death of a loved one is a difficult time. Effective January 1, 2020, the Estate Administration Tax would be eliminated for taxable estates with assets of \$50,000 or less and would be reduced by \$250 for larger taxable estates.
- Making the auto insurance experience simpler for consumers by facilitating the use of electronic communications and electronic commerce by insurance companies in doing business



with their customers.

- Requiring Ontario to prepare an annual debt burden reduction strategy to responsibly manage its debt, which is the largest of any sub-national jurisdiction in the world, while maintaining the high-quality services that people expect and deserve - both now and for future generations.
 - Advancing a Digital First strategy that will deliver simpler, faster and better services across Ontario by eliminating outdated processes and lowering administrative burdens and costs.
 - Implementing a transparency measure at the gas pump that will make clear the true cost of the job-killing federal carbon tax on Ontario drivers, families and businesses.
 - Protecting titles for financial planners and financial advisors in Ontario by introducing a new framework for the financial services industry to require that individuals using the financial planner and financial advisor titles have an appropriate credential.
- "Passing Budget 2019 gives the government important and modern tools to restore fiscal accountability and provide relief to hard-working families and businesses," said Minister of Finance Vic Fedeli. "This is how the government is protecting what matters most and putting people first."

Via ontario.ca

Statement by the Prime Minister on the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers

Ottawa, Ontario - May 29, 2019

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement on the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers:

"Today, we recognize UN peacekeepers, past and present, who have served at great personal risk to promote peace, restore stability, and protect those most in need. We also pay tribute to the 115 peacekeepers and UN staff from around the world who, between January 2018 and March 2019, gave their lives in the service of peace.

"The work of a UN peacekeeper has never been more demanding. They uphold human rights, advance democracy and the rule of law, protect the most vulnerable from the ravages of war, and help people rebuild their lives when conflict ends. Every day, they put their lives on the line to pave the way forward for peace.

"The dedication, professionalism, and perseverance of UN peacekeepers are a testament to how the international community can work together



to resolve conflicts. Canada is proud to have contributed, together with our global partners, to over seven decades of UN peacekeeping efforts. Today, we are continuing this tradition, serving with UN missions in Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, South Sudan, the Middle East, and Mali, where Canadians in uniform are deployed to provide medical evacuation, transportation, and logistical support to UN forces.

"Canada has taken a leadership role to meet the changing nature of conflict and prepare for the future of peacekeeping. Our contributions will help make peace operations

via pm.gc.ca

NAME CHANGE NOTICE

I, Stanly Jayakumar, father of Johannah, holder of Indian passport number L 6781758 issued at Toronto on 10 March 2014, permanent resident of Canada (12-5, Cap Square, 1st Main, 1st Cross East, Meena Estate Sowripalayam Road, Coimbatore - 28, Tamil Nadu, India) and presently residing at Unit # 507, 25 Silver Springs Blvd, Toronto, ON. M1V 1M9, do hereby change the name of my daughter from Johannah to Johannah Jayakumar, with immediate effect.

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PUBLISHING TEAM

Managing Editor & Publisher: Logan Velumailum, B. Sc. - editor4mj@gmail.com
 Editorial & Marketing Consultant: Siva Sivapragasam - tsivapragasam31@gmail.com
 Executive Editorial Board: Tashvir Narine - tashvir.narine@gmail.com
 Krishni Narine - krishni31@gmail.com
 K. Thirukumaran
 Graphics & Layout Design: Santosh Kumar - kasantosh@gmail.com
 Graphic Support: Suren Rasadurai
 Photo Journalists: Gname B. Gnanendran - digitalgname@yahoo.ca, Rudy Ruthran - rudy@ruthran.com
 Health & Care: Aykta Grover - www.aurawellness.ca, Dr. Amal Siva, Jeavana Sritharan, Andrea Shanmugarajah, Dr. S. Sivanesan, Dr. Nuwan Fonseka, Dr. Shiyam Loganathan, Dr. Harshini Sriskanda
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 Education: RG Education Centers - www.rgeducation.com
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Global Day of Parents: Being A Parent Is the Most Important Job In The World

By Harrish Thirukumaran

On June 1, 2019, the world commemorated Global Day of Parents. Proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2012 with resolution A/RES/66/292, it honours parents throughout the world. This provides an opportunity to appreciate all parents in all parts of the world for their selfless commitment to children and their lifelong sacrifice towards nurturing this relationship. Interestingly, since the 1980s, the important role of the family has increasingly come to the attention of the international community. The General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions, and proclaimed the International Year of the Family and the International Day of Families.

Considering the critical role of parents in the rearing of children, the Global Day of Parents recognizes also that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children. For the full and harmonious development of their personality, children should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

The central goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the world leaders in 2015, focus on ending poverty, promoting shared economic prosperity, social development and people's well-being while protecting the environment. Families remain at the centre of social life ensuring the well-being of their members, educating and socializing children and youth and caring for young and old.

In particular, family-oriented policies can contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 1 to 5 relating to doing away with poverty and hunger; ensuring healthy lives and promoting of well-being for all ages; ensuring educational opportunities throughout the lifespan and achieving gender equality.

Although this day has passed, it is not too late to recognize and celebrate the contributions of parents to your livelihoods in the Greater Toronto Area, and the rest of Canada. A key message that everyone, especially parents, should take away is

that being a parent is the most important job in the world. The first 1,000 days of life is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build a baby's brain and shape a child's ability to learn and grow. Parents want to give their children the best they can. Yet, many have no choice but to work long hours, often away from home, to support their families. It's about time. Parents need time to give their child the best start in life. And it's about time governments and businesses supported them by investing in family-friendly policies that help parents do just that.

One way to bolster the child-rearing duties of parents is to take a poll on the sorts of family-friendly public policies that you believe can contribute to the wellbeing of your family. The poll is available at www.unicef.org/parenting/its-about-time. This is part of a larger month-long campaign by the United Nations Children's Fund or UNICEF to call on world leaders to invest in family-friendly policies that support parents to give their children "the best start in life."

As a parent, David Beckham, a UN goodwill ambassador, notes "When you have children, you want to protect them, you want to teach them", he said. "I always tell my kids to be respectful, to be polite, to treat people how you want to be treated."



UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador
DAVID BECKHAM

INDEX June 2019

Main News	1
Ads	2
Canada News	3 - 6
Publisher's Info	4
World News	7 - 10
Health & Care	14 - 17
Special Feature	18 - 29
Education	30
Science & Technology	31
Business & Finance	32 & 33
Community Watch	34 - 46
Ads	47 & 48

Canada Historical Milestones:



June 18, 1990

Nelson Mandela visits Ottawa only four months after his release from 27 years in prison. He is on a mission to gain support for abolishing apartheid in South Africa. Mandela will speak at a joint session of the House of Commons and the Senate.

Mandela will return in 1998 to receive the Order of Canada. He will also start the Canadian Friends of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund. This charity will close in 2011.

Mandela's final visit, in 2001, will see him become the first living recipient of honorary Canadian citizenship.

Eid Mubarak

June 5, 2019
Best Wishes from
Monsoon Journal



Monsoon Journal Wishes Readers, Advertisers and Well-Wishers a
Happy Father's Day
Sunday June 16, 2019



"If my mind can conceive it, and my heart can believe it - then I can achieve it" - Muhammad Ali (January 17, 1942 - June 03, 2016) (born: Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr.) Professional boxer, philanthropist and social activist.

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

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CONSERVATIVES TO FOCUS ON RESTORING IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

May 3, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OTTAWA, ON – Hon. Michelle Rempel, Conservative Shadow Minister for Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, and Pierre Paul-Hus, Shadow Minister for Public Safety, Border Security, and Emergency Preparedness, issued the following joint statement following a comprehensive press conference which outlined next steps for Conservatives on the immigration file, including policy and principles by which an Andrew Scheer government would govern:



Hon. Michelle Rempel

“The Conservatives’ Pathways to Canada national consultation tour on improving our immigration system has concluded and we heard clearly from Canadians that they want the system to be fair and orderly and for Canada to remain a safe and welcoming place for the world’s most vulnerable.

“We also heard a number of serious concerns around service standards, the temporary foreign worker program, delays and backlogs for those fleeing violence and persecution, and ballooning costs associated with people who

enter Canada illegally from the United States.

“After spending the last three years demonizing and personally attacking Canadians for raising these concerns, the reality is that Justin Trudeau has effectively broken the immigration system.

“For the remainder of this session, Conservatives will focus on improving services for newcomers, cracking down on crooked immigration consultants,

Prime Minister launches Canada’s Youth Policy

Ottawa, Ontario - May 3, 2019

Young Canadians are the most educated, connected, and diverse generation this country has ever seen. They are actively serving their communities and advocating for a more fair, diverse, and inclusive Canada. Their participation in civic life, including government decision-making, is crucial to Canada’s continued success.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Youth, Justin Trudeau, launched Canada’s first-ever youth policy during the Canada Youth Summit, which brought together young Canadians to discuss what matters most to them.

Canada’s Youth Policy – created for youth, by youth – will help the voices of young people better guide government priorities and actions. Input from more than 5,000 young people shaped this

new, whole-of-government policy. This policy will go a long way to lift up diverse youth voices and make sure more young people have the chance to take part in federal decision-making.

To support young Canadians who want to be more active in their communities, the Government of Canada proposes to expand the Canada Service Corps youth service program. The program would provide up to 15,000 service placements for young Canadians annually by 2024, helping them gain valuable skills and leadership experience. The Government of Canada is working to help young people reach their full potential and feel empowered to create positive change for themselves, their communities, their country, and the world.

[via pm.gc.ca](http://via.pm.gc.ca)

demanding answers on the lawsuit over visa centres, and solving the ongoing illegal border crossing crisis.

“Conservatives will continue to work to restore order, fairness, compassion, and integrity to our immigration sys-

tem, so that Canadians can continue to have confidence in both the system and in Canada’s reputation as a welcoming place for newcomers seeking a better life.”

[Via conservative.ca](http://Via.conservative.ca)

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Premier Ford Asks Partners to Find Four Per Cent Savings and Help Protect Front-Line Services

Government of Ontario to provide funding for large urban municipalities and district school boards to conduct line-by-line reviews



May 21, 2019 1:30 P.M.

Office of the Premier

AJAX — The Ontario government is offering to help district school boards and large urban municipalities protect core public services for future generations by finding savings of four cents on every dollar spent.

Today, Premier Doug Ford was at a joint luncheon of the Greater Ottawa Chamber of Commerce, the Whitby Chamber of Commerce and the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade. He announced that the government is providing \$7.35 million for large urban municipalities and district school boards interested in conducting line-by-line reviews to identify potential savings, while maintaining vital front-line services, through the Audit and Accountability Fund.

“Our government was elected to fix 15 years of Liberal mismanagement, put the province on a path to balance and protect services like health care and education,” said Ford. “But the previous Liberal government was using the credit card to pay the mortgage and, with interest payments costing our province \$36 million a day, we can’t do it alone. We campaigned on finding four cents for every provincial dollar spent and we are asking our partners to do the same.”

In Ontario, over 90 per cent of provincial spending goes towards funding school boards, hospitals, municipalities and other outside organizations. By providing resources through the Audit and Accountability Fund, the government is empowering school boards and municipalities to work towards the

shared goal of returning the province to fiscal balance while making sure vital programs and services are maintained.

In the 2019 Ontario Budget, Protecting What Matters Most, the government put forward a plan that sets Ontario on the right path to achieve savings of four cents on the dollar, building on work done to realize four cents on the dollar in cost avoidance. The government’s plan also saw an increase in funding for health care and postsecondary education, supporting municipal transformation efforts, while moving forward on reducing the province’s debt burden.

“We are willing to work with our partners to find the savings within their budget. This exercise is about putting structures in place that create a culture of efficiency,” said Peter Bethlenfalvy, President of the Treasury Board. “The interest on debt accumulated by the previous government is the single largest cut to frontline services in Ontario’s history. To achieve structural balance and a sustainable government, we will put the People at the centre of every service, every regulation, every program, process and policy. We’re ready to help our transfer payment partners and we need their help.”

“Municipalities and district school boards now have the tools they need to find real savings and protect what matters most to the people of Ontario,” said Ford. “Our government is ready and willing to roll up our sleeves and work with anyone who shares our priority of returning Ontario to fiscal health.”

Via ontario.ca

Yemen update: UNICEF chief condemns attack in Taiz that claims lives of seven children

27 May 2019

Peace and Security

In a statement condemning reported airstrikes on a petrol station in the south-western city on Friday, Henrietta Fore said that the children who died were aged between four and 14.

The attack in the east of Taiz pushed up confirmed child casualty numbers in the war-torn country to 27 in just over 10 days, according to Ms. Fore, who warned that the actual numbers “are likely to be even higher”.

Since March 2015, UNICEF confirmed that at least 7,300 children were killed or seriously injured in Yemen amid clashes between supporters of Yemeni President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi and Houthi opposition groups.

Earlier this month, airstrikes on several neighbourhoods in Yemen’s capital Sana’a reportedly killed five children and injured dozens more, according to UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), prompting widespread condemnation from OCHA and other UN agencies.

The development comes as UN Secretary-General António Guterres called for “caution and restraint” from belligerents, “both in terms of actions and in terms of rhetoric”.

Guterres: ‘Full confidence’ in Yemen Special Envoy

In response to questions last Friday about President Hadi’s reported criticism of UN Special Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths, linked to the withdrawal of Houthi fighters from Hudaydah, Mr. Guterres’s Spokesperson reiterated the Secretary-General’s “full confidence in Mr. Griffiths and his work”.

The spokesperson added that a letter to the Yemen President from Mr. Guterres also underlined the UN’s commitment to the ceasefire deal agreed in Sweden last December.

That accord – sealed by representatives of President Hadi and the Houthi opposition – stems from a “deep desire to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people and assist in addressing the humanitarian crises, which continues to beset Yemen and its people, who have suffered for long”, the Spokesperson explained to journalists in New York.

The terms of the Stockholm Agreement, as it is known, include a ceasefire in the port city of Hudaydah and troop withdrawals, allowing the Red

Sea supply hub to be managed and monitored with UN support and enabling the distribution of vital provisions to millions of desperate civilians.

The deal also includes a prisoner exchange and steps towards a ceasefire in the city of Taiz.

Mr Griffiths “will redouble efforts to support the parties on delivering on the commitments made in Stockholm”, the UN chief’s spokesperson added, “and do so in a manner which is balanced and fully supportive of achieving a peaceful and lasting political solution to this conflict”.

Migrants lives at risk – UN migration agency

In a related development, UN migration agency IOM has said that thousands of Ethiopian migrants’ lives are at risk in the country, after the Government halted a planned returns programme.

IOM is calling for help from the international community to get more than 2,300 Ethiopian migrants home from Yemen – including 150 women and 470 children.

Until now the migrants – who travel through Yemen to reach the Gulf States where they hope to find work – had been detained in two sports stadiums and a military camp without basic services, IOM reported.

Under a deal with the authorities, flights were due to begin at the weekend, but they have been delayed “until at least Wednesday”, IOM said.

“This delay threatens the safety of more than 2,300 migrants who continue to be held in conditions inconsistent with internationally-agreed standards, exposed to severe health and protection risks,” said Mohammed Abdiker, IOM Director of Operations and Emergencies in Geneva.

Earlier this month, IOM reported that at least 14 migrants detained in Lahj died following complications linked to acute watery diarrhea.

“Lives have been lost due to disease brought on by the appalling detention conditions and one young man, shot while detained, will likely never walk again,” Mr. Abdiker insisted, adding that the flight delays “are putting thousands of migrants’ lives at further risk.”

“We are urging the leaders of the Coalition and the Government of Yemen to urgently approve these flights, ensuring that all who need to go home do so with safety and dignity.”

Via news.un.org



Does Congress Party Have a Future in Face of Modi Onslaught?

May 27, 2019

By Anjana Pasricha

NEW DELHI —

It was India's "Grand Old Party." The Congress Party ruled the country for 55 out of 71 years since independence. But following the party's crushing electoral debacle for a second time, there are questions about its future as the Nehru-Gandhi political dynasty at its helm is unable to counter the most powerful leader India has produced in decades: Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Contrary to expectations, India's mammoth general election turned out to be virtually a no-contest between Modi and Congress Party president Rahul Gandhi as it became a presidential-style battle.

"It is not what went wrong with the Congress, it is more of a story of what went right for Prime Minister Modi. He stood as a tall leader, as an achiever, as somebody who understood people's aspirations," says political commentator Rasheed Kidwai, who has authored a biography of Rahul Gandhi's mother, Sonia Gandhi. On the other hand, "Rahul Gandhi is temperamentally not a power wielder. He is a trustee of power." The sixth member of the Nehru Gandhi family to lead the party, Rahul is often seen as a "reluctant politician", despite his spirited campaign to revive the party and challenge Modi after its rout in 2014.

Gandhi's rallies drew crowds, but his efforts to project Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party as a threat to India's secular traditions or to highlight issues of economic distress failed to resonate. His attempts to nail him for corruption in a deal to buy Rafale French fighter jets fell flat. His promise of a minimum wage for India's poorest families was met with skepticism, even among the poor.

On the other hand, Modi, successfully wooed voters with his message of strident nationalism and subtle appeal to the majority Hindu community. Along with it, there was another theme: he projected himself as the humble son

of a tea seller, a self made man who fought all odds to reach the top post in contrast to what he called the "entitled" Gandhi who had inherited the mantle of leadership of the Congress Party.

It drew cheers from the country's emerging middle and lower-middle classes, exhausted with dynastic politics.

The Congress Party's tally of 52 seats in parliament was only a notch higher than the 44 seats it won in 2014 in the 545-member parliament. The party's candidates returned empty-handed in half the Indian states and in several others the party only mustered a single digit tally. Modi's BJP won 303 seats. The scale of its losses not just crushed hopes the Congress Party would either lead a credible challenge to Modi or return as invigorated opposition - it once again raised questions over the leadership of the Gandhi family. Rahul Gandhi has offered to resign, but expectedly the party that has no second rung of leadership has turned it down. "The party will fulfill its role as a strong opposition. We need Rahul Gandhi to lead us in these challenging times," Congress Party spokesman Randeep Surjewala said after a meeting of the party's senior leaders on the weekend.

Rahul Gandhi also lost the Amethi constituency the party had held for 50 years in Uttar Pradesh state. In another humiliating blow for the Gandhi family, his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who was appointed in a senior post to revive the party, failed to make an impact. Rahul's mother, Sonia Gandhi, won her party's only seat in the state.

Rahul Gandhi's victory in another constituency in South India means he will continue to be a lawmaker.

Dynastic politics is not limited to the Congress Party: lawmakers from political families are a routine feature of Indian politics.

But political commentators say in an era showing a preference for strong, populist leaders, Modi was the clear victor.

"There is a new sense of nationalism



sweeping across many conventional democracies. There is a yearning for a strong leader that captures the public imagination," according to political analyst Ajoy Bose. "I don't really see the conventional Congress Party or the

conventional leadership mounting a challenge to Modi. He has completely taken the country by storm."

Gandhi tried to give a positive message after the party's rout. "We have a different vision of India [from Modi]", said the head of the party that has long projected itself as a defender of India's minorities, such as Muslims who worry about religious polarization and a rise in hate crimes since Modi came to power. "There is no need to be afraid. We will continue to work hard and we will eventually win."

But it may be difficult to reinvent what analysts call a "fading party." They say Modi's BJP now occupies the dominant political space that the Congress party did for decades. "Congress is going to get reduced to, you know, like the Liberals did in Britain," says Rasheed Kidwai.

via voanews.com

Children in crisis-torn eastern Ukraine 'too terrified to learn' amid spike in attacks on schools

20 May 2019

Humanitarian Aid

Since the start of eastern Ukraine's five-year conflict, more than 750 educational facilities on both sides have been damaged or destroyed, UNICEF said, explaining that there has been a four-fold increase in attacks on schools during the first four months of the year, compared to the same period in 2018.

Between January and April, there were 12 attacks on schools, compared to three incidents during the same period last year. The alarming increase is reminiscent of the violence experienced by schoolchildren and teachers in 2017, when there were more than 40 attacks on education facilities.

"Daily life at school is disrupted by shelling and shootings, forcing



children to take cover in school basements and underground bomb shelters. In many cases, children have become too terrified to learn," said Henrietta Fore, UNICEF Executive Director.

Contd. on page 9...

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BY THULASI MUTTULINGAM

HUMANS OF NORTHERN SRI LANKA

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

CALL A SPADE A SPADE

The news everywhere is bad; I know. Sri Lanka is burning again. Is Hanuman back here?

Sometimes, I don't know if I am living in the times of Ramayana or not – too much intrigue, too much angst, and too much burning.

And as always, it's the poor people's houses that will burn.

500 years from now, people might read about Sirisena and/or Mohamed Zahran but will they know the toll on the common people? Why are the common people so dispensable? I keep asking this again and again. Why are we just a footnote – in our histories, in our political stances, and in our policies right now? Are we cannon fodder and nothing more?

People power indeed. Where is our collective power? This is so wearying.

Communal fear

I am one of the “privileged” in Sri Lanka right now. A minority yes, but not the targeted minority.

Thus, I can sleep without fear of attack nightly, while Muslims around the country stay awake in case a pogrom à la '83 heads their way. No, that's not paranoia they are exhibiting; it's a very legitimate fear. In recent days, I have watched anxiously while my Muslim friends post on social media – over and around the social media ban – about contingency plans if the violence being unleashed in pockets of the country – primarily Muslim pockets – heads their way. What a way to live. An entire demographic of people having to pay for what a handful of terrorists did.

As I write, hundreds of Muslim businesses have been looted and destroyed. One Muslim man, the main breadwinner of his young family, has been killed. Several others have been attacked. And all this in the face of security personnel swarming all over the country, allegedly to maintain peace. So where is the peace? All we see is pieces. Pieces of Sri Lanka. Pieces of our hearts. Pieces of our collective harmony and goodwill, being cleaved with swords even as we speak. And no, it is not the Muslim community wielding the swords, even though they are being made to answer for why they had any in the first place. The lions representing the flag carry the weapon with impunity.

As if all that were not enough, to put the icing and the cherry on the top of this crumbled cake comes the media. So much irresponsible reporting, rabble rousing, and race baiting was being published in recent days in mainstream newspapers; I don't even know where to begin. The Muslim community is not only under siege, they are being painted as the oppressors in the media. Much of the race baiting is so bad it is almost laughable – except there are many stupid people out there, and irresponsible media carriage like this will only serve to legitimise their active, rampant racism.

No, the Muslims are not taking over, and you are not under threat, calm down.

I know there will be the inevitable outcry of “what about the real victims of the Easter attacks here?” as if we are subsuming them. Let me pre-empt you: Yes, the people and children who died in the Easter Attacks should be mourned. As a country, we have not had collective time to mourn them – it's been too much of a roller coaster since then.

But, if your idea of “mourning the dead” is to go berserk attacking the Muslims – and



head off questions on what the heck you are doing with, “traitors, ask about the real victims here” – then no, many of us “traitors” are not going to put up with that. This holier than thou rhetoric doesn't wash either. This is precisely what landed us here in the first place.

Role of religion

Organised religions have two main aspects – providing spiritual solace (which is what they should be there for) and political manoeuvring (which they ideally should have no truck with, but they do). The first is beneficent, the second malignant.

When people stick to the spiritual aspects of religion alone, which is why the vast majority of the faithful of any religion subscribe to religions in the first place, life is stable and sustainable for all concerned.

It is when politically (or geo-politically) motivated powers use the political aspects of organised religions to whip up mindless hatred in people, mobilising them to engage in violence of the sort that they otherwise would not engage in, that we come to the sort of sorry mess we currently see in Sri Lanka.

Over the last five years, I have been watching developments in religious fundamentalism – across all religions practiced here – with a furrowed brow. None of these movements are organic, that goes without saying. We are clearly being puppeteered at the hands of bigger powers. But then the question arises, why as sentient humans do we still get puppeteered so effectively?

Why can't we step back and say, no, we will not subscribe to such a vicious “them vs. us” rhetoric?

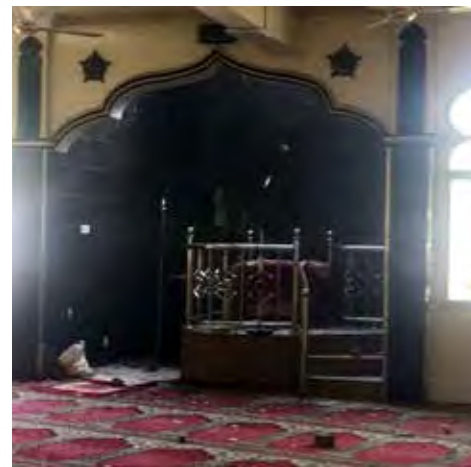
Most people subscribe to religion to ensure stability in their lives. Ironically, that very tool is being used to destabilise us now.

Mandatory disclaimer: Yes, I know religion can be used as a force for good – such as when Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith stepped up in our leader-less vacuum to showcase remarkable leadership which directly paved the way to significant peace and good will among the affected communities. In the face of so massive an attack upon his community as the unprovoked Easter attacks, such leadership in averting revenge attacks while fostering goodwill between the affected Christian community and the Muslim community is truly commendable.

Yet, religion can, and indeed is, being used also to corral tribalism and blood thirst, right now in Sri Lanka.

ISIS is not the only terror we have to watch out for, and the Muslim community is not the only one grappling with religious fundamentalism. Yet, we keep calling on only the Muslims to reform.

The Easter attackers are all terrorists, we are clear on that. Who were the people burning mosques and Muslim businesses in recent days? Nationalists? What a nice-sounding word. So conveniently reminiscent



of patriotism, which is also touted as a good word. While the rest of us are “traitors” because we refuse to loot and burn?

Sorry, but the mosque attackers, just like the Easter attackers, are terrorists too. Call them that. They are not nationalists. They are not rioters. They are not looters. They are terrorists, and they have been terrorising the Muslim community for days on end with impunity now.

So the burqa and the niqab have been banned have they? Such a load off our minds on enforcing national security, that. Oh wait! The terrorists vandalising Muslim properties have their faces covered with cloth too – how did they get allowed to be out and about like that, especially in this current climate? Where are the reams of media reports talking about how this is a threat to national security? Where are the demands on the need for the Sinhala-Buddhist community to introspect on what went wrong from within?

Instead, much of the media coverage was devoted to the swords recovered from mosques, charges that the Muslim community is still scrambling to answer for.

Many of the mosque attackers had swords too. Why did they have stockpiles of them handy, and how were these caches missed in the security sweeps across the country?

As usual, there are far more questions than answers. Do you, the average citizen, ever feel like you've been made to wear a dunce cap at the end of all this? I often do. We are all being made collective fools of – and we are letting them.

Yet, as a Tamil, I am aware that feeling foolish and manipulated is a position of privilege, given that those are the worst of my concerns at the moment. The Muslims scrambling to answer charges of terrorism as a collective community while also scrambling to save their lives, limbs, and property have it much worse. I empathise.

We come from a stock that knows how it feels like to have to continually prove how Sri Lankan we are, whilst at the same time being made to feel as if we are only invaders and usurpers who will never be accepted as true blue Sri Lankans no matter how hard we try. And if the black sheep that will exist in every community like Zahran and co. disrupt the model minority behaviour we all are beholden to, we will collectively have to pay for it.

The Muslim community is paying for it now.

As for those making them pay – well, they are the “nationalists”. They can cover their faces if they want to. They can not only carry but also use swords with impunity if they want to. No one will question their Sri Lankan identity.

Shakespeare didn't live in our time, so he could blithely ask, “what's in a name?”

He didn't live to see this day and the repercussions of labelling some terrorists and others nationalists, of labelling some religious fundamentalists and others “defenders of the faith”.

But the bard was right in one aspect. By whatever name, they stink just as much

pictures - Scenes from Minuwangoda via: twitter.com/rayazanarm



DR Congo: Strengthened effort against Ebola is paying off, but insecurity still major constraint – UN health agency

28 May 2019

Health

Although the Ebola response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continues to make headway thanks to the determination of health workers on the ground, insecurity is still hampering the response, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday. This has led the UN to establish a new coordination structure in the hopes that access to at-risk areas can be improved.

“We are seeing a dramatic increase over the past few months in the number of security incidents in the area of North Kivu, which lies at the epicentre of this ebola outbreak,” said Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa, to journalists in Geneva as she recalled the brutal killing of a WHO colleague in mid-April.

She added that on Saturday, another attack took place during which another health worker was killed.

Insecurity equals lack of access

So far, in 2019, there have been 174 attacks against health care facilities or workers. That’s a three-fold increase compared to the number of attacks that took place during the previous five-month period (August through December 2018).

“Insecurity really is what is making the response to this Ebola outbreak so challenging and also so unpredictable,” she insisted, adding. “And this insecurity leads to a lack of access and that is really what is driving the increase in cases. When the response can’t reach people, they don’t get the chance to be vaccinated or to receive life-saving treatments if they do fall ill.”

Currently, the DRC’s worst ever outbreak of the deadly virus has seen 1,920 Ebola cases overall, including 1,281 deaths. Despite the risks, the more than 700 workers deployed by WHO remain in the area working alongside other health teams providing care.



“This Ebola response is one of the most complex health emergencies the world has faced,” said Dr. Moeti, explaining that “the authority of the Government is not strong, and what further complicates the situation is that there are many belligerents and armed groups and parties, and it’s not always clear under whose leadership they are operating”.

A new UN coordinating structure

To strengthen the coordination of the response and “create a much more enabling environment”, this week, the Deputy head of the DRC peacekeeping mission MONUSCO, David Gressly – newly appointed UN Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator – will be arriving in the city of Butembo, at the epicentre of the outbreak. Among several other key objectives, his role will be to help strengthen the DRC Government’s engagement around security, in a bid to reconcile various warring parties in the area.

In parallel, a scale-up of operations in the region from health and humanitarian organizations is also expected.

“I’m hopeful that this new structure will bring the much-needed stability, safety and clarity, and enable the response to proceed,” said Dr. Moeti.

Listen to our interview with David

Gressly, the new Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator:

‘Encouraging signs’

To date, more than 500 people have survived thanks to adequate care. In particular, transmissions in medical centres (“nosocomial transmissions”), which represented 35 per cent of all transmissions just a few weeks ago, which are now down to 5 per cent.

“That number is still too high, we still want to reach for zero,” said Dr.

Michael Ryan, chief of WHO’s Health Emergencies Programme.

Enhanced community engagement efforts continue to be put in place with 21 community Ebola committees in place so far, and vaccinations are also ongoing thanks to pop-up centres. Currently, 95 per cent of people offered vaccinations are accepting them and 90 per cent of families are agreeing to “safe and dignified burials”.

Dr. Ryan also explained that efforts in improving the surveillance and tracing of cases are also showing progress with 1,400 alerts per day on average, a number that was only half of that six weeks ago. The number of samples taken daily for laboratory analysis is also increasing steadily with the proportion of positive cases decreasing.

In another “encouraging sign”, Monday was “the first day in a very long time that we had zero positive cases among community deaths”, said Dr. Ryan, as he gave credit to the “brave frontline workers who risk their lives every day to do this work and to our communities who are very much engaged and participating in the response.”

Via news.un.org

Contd. from Page 7...

“Destroyed classrooms surrounded by sandbags to protect children from stray bullets are no place for a child to learn. All parties to the conflict must protect schools and keep children safe,” Ms. Fore said.

UNICEF called for an immediate end to the fighting and the protection of children at all times. The agency also urged all governments, including Ukraine, to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration, an intergovernmental political commitment to take concrete measures to protect students, educators and educational facilities from deliberate and indiscriminate attack during armed conflict.

Next week, the government of

Spain will host the third International Conference on Safe Schools, an opportunity for states to highlight the progress they have made in implementing the Declaration.

UNICEF said it is working with partners across eastern Ukraine to provide much-needed counselling, psychosocial support, and information on the risks of mines to hundreds of thousands of children, youth and caregivers affected by the conflict.

The agency is also providing support to education facilities so that repairs to damaged schools and kindergartens can be made, and education supplies such as educational kits, furniture and sport equipment can be replaced.

Via news.un.org

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Mozambique cyclones a 'wake-up call' to boost resistance: UN weather agency

29 May 2019

Climate Change

A World Meteorological Organization (WMO) fact-finding mission to Mozambique recommended on Wednesday a package of disaster-risk-reduction priorities to strengthen the country's early warning systems and reduce damage due to weather, climate and water-related hazards.

"Mozambique needs to build resilience", WMO Secretary-General Peteri Taalas said in a message to an international pledging conference to secure support for reconstruction, on Saturday. "Although the number of tropical cyclones globally is expected to reduce in the future, the number of most intense tropical cyclones (category 4 and 5), associated with more rainfall, will increase in a warming climate," he said.

He asserted that future sea level rise "will exacerbate the impact of storm surge on coastal regions" and raise flooding concerns, "particularly for low-lying cities such as Beira", which was inundated by the cyclones in March and April. It also draws at-



tention to Mozambique's vulnerability to floods from both rivers and sea. The fact-finding team said that a \$27 million investment is needed to strengthen meteorological and water supply sectors.

This includes reconstruction, rehabilitation and modernization of infrastructure and equipment, land surveys for flood-risk mapping and satellite rainfall estimation and forecast training.

The team of meteorologists and hydrologists, headed by WMO's Filipe Lúcio, will present a report to an international pledging conference for Mozambique, taking place on Friday and Saturday in Beira.

'A salutary warning'

On 14 March, months-worth of rain fell in a matter of hours around the coastal city as Idai provoked one of the worst disasters to ever hit the southern hemisphere.

The cyclone and subsequent flooding killed more than 600 people, injured an estimated 1,600, affected more than 1.8 million and caused an estimated \$773 million in damages to buildings, infrastructure and agriculture.

"In times of floods, Mozambicans seek safety on roofs of buildings. But the ferocity of Idai's winds blew the roofs away", said Mr. Lucio. "It is a salutary warning about the future scale of the combined challenges from urban-

ization and climate change-related sea level rise and extreme weather".

The fact-finding team's visit coincided with Cyclone Kenneth, the most intense tropical cyclone ever known to have hit the Cabo Delgado province, on 25 April.

According to the report, WMO identified major weaknesses on preparedness, emergency coordination and response, including the lack of a backup communication system for warning and emergency operations and an evacuation plan for cities, particularly in low-lying areas.

Moreover, because Mozambique is downstream of nine major river basins, it is prone to devastating floods, but water use upstream can also exacerbated low flows during droughts.

While climate change projections indicate a global decrease in numbers of tropical storms and cyclones, they signal possible increases in intensities and associated rainfall. And, assuming all other factors are equal, WMO predicts that sea-level rise will exacerbate the impact of storm surge on coastal regions.

Via news.un.org



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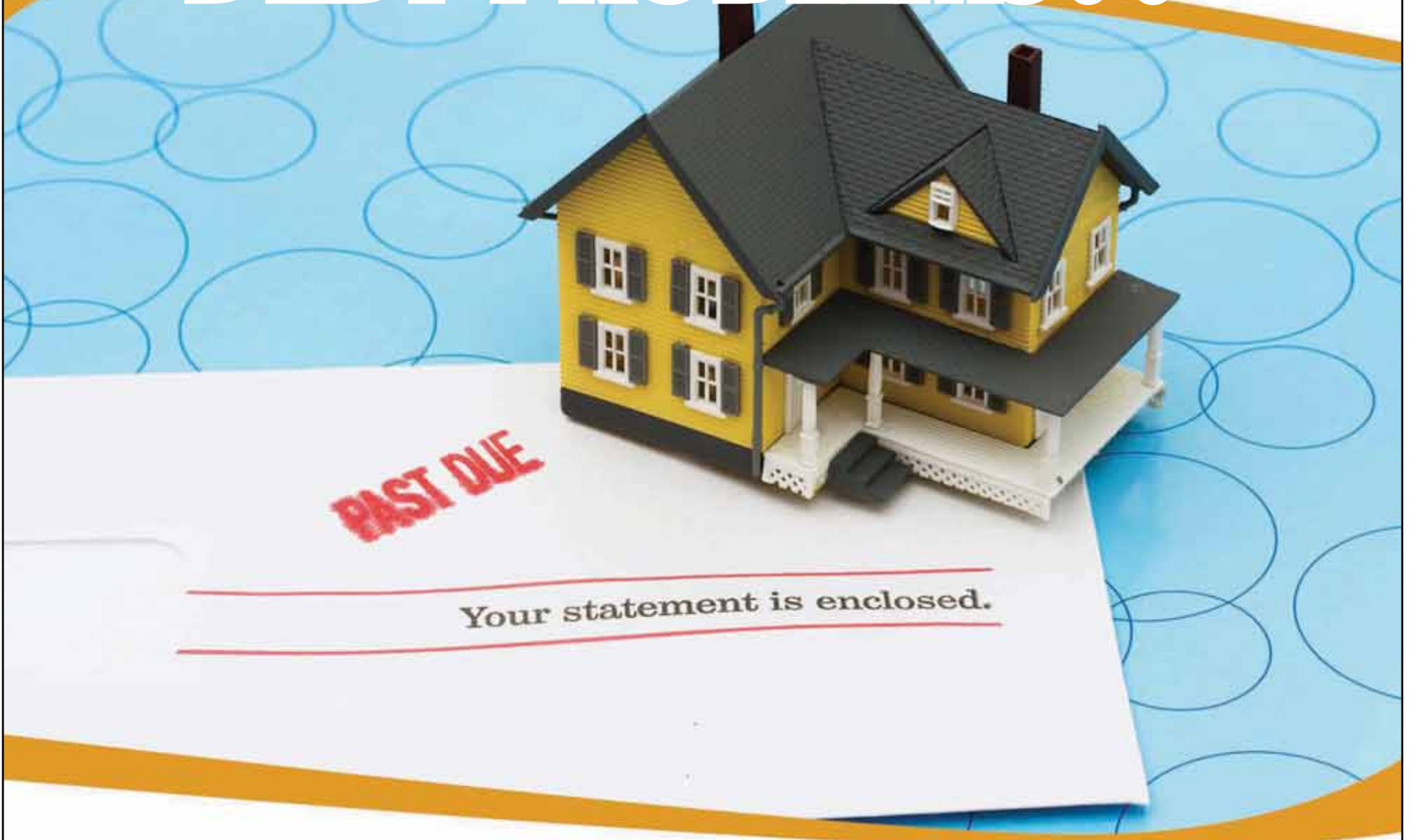
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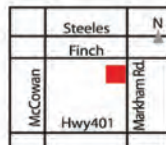


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AN INTERVIEW WITH SUSAN MARSHALL, CEO OF BRAIN TUMOUR FOUNDATION OF CANADA

By Harrish Thirukumar

On May 14, 2019, the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada has launched the first-ever Brain Tumour Registry of Canada (BTRC) – a surveillance research collaborative. Working as a nationwide, multi-centre initiative, the BTRC will become a cornerstone to optimizing clinical outcomes using evidence-based decision making for the treatment and care of brain tumour patients across Canada.

The registry was conceived by a committee chaired by Dr. Joseph Megyesi, then Chairman of the Board of Directors at Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada. Advocacy efforts led by Jennifer Gouchie-Terris - whose son Brandon was diagnosed with a brain tumour - focused on obtaining complete data to create evidence to support brain tumour policy and research which resulted in the passing of a Canadian House of Commons Bill M235 in February 2007. The Bill called for national guidelines for the surveillance of all malignant and benign (non-malignant) brain tumours, but funds were not aligned to accomplish this task. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) subsequently explored the gap in the collection and reporting of non-malignant brain tumour data and identified barriers to data collection within the provincial and territorial cancer registries. At the time, only three of thirteen regional registries formally collected information on non-malignant brain and CNS tumours.

Susan Marshall, CEO of Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada, was available for an interview with the Monsoon Journal to discuss this event.

Q: What does this registry mean for public health in Canada?

A: Well certainly this registry means that in Canada, we will have credible information and data about patients who have primary brain tumours. Specifically, we got information in the report from four provinces. So, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario. So, this first report gives a really good understanding of the incidence of primary brain tumours, both malignant and non-malignant, in those four provinces. It represents about 70% of the Canadian population being represented in this first report. So, for the first time we got good information in this first report that can be used by those in the public health sector, those in the patient support sector like Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada, and the research and healthcare sectors so we can care for these patients better.



Q: How can more accurate and comprehensive information on brain tumours contribute to the ability of researchers to lead cure and prevention efforts in Canada?

A: Well this information really gives researchers a better understanding of where brain tumour patients are, what type of brain tumours they have, and, really, until this time, we've been using information from the Central Brain Tumour Registry in the United States and other sources of brain tumour incidence from other countries and just applying it to the Canadian population. And so researchers have just been relying on information that is incomplete and not accurate. So, with this information, they'll know where to focus their efforts for the different types of brain tumours. There is 120 different types, and where those patients are, and who they are and just build studies and research novel ideas and research that will bring hope to the patients and their families.

Q: Are there any challenges related to access and privacy of information on this registry?

A: No, this information in this registry report have come directly from the provincial cancer registries. So, what has happened is the cancer registries, which are in each province and territory, collect data from the healthcare system and produce reports on incidence and prevalence. To date, they have not been reporting nonmalignant brain tumours, so they have not been giving the complete picture. So, they deal with the privacy issues associated with that. There's no information about patients that is in the report we have. It has come directly from the

provinces to adhere to their own provincial privacy rules, and, therefore, the registry is compliant with all of those privacy rules of each of the provinces. So, no, there is no issue.

Q: What is the greatest need for patients for patients currently living with brain tumours?

A: So, brain tumour patients, they need more hope. There's not a lot of hope for patients who have certain types of brain tumours like glioblastoma, which is the most common malignant brain tumour. There's not a lot of treatment options for them. There is a standard of care that patients have, but it doesn't help all of them, and they're looking for more opportunities to try new things and different things and get hope for the future. On the non-

malignant side, which is really important to this report today, because this report contains information about that, it means that the researchers and clinicians will be able to use that information to provide better options for them as well. Often non-malignant brain tumours can be deadly and life altering as well. So, either way from both sides whether you have a malignant and non-malignant brain tumour, you're looking for hope, and I think that comes from this registry report.

Q: Will this registry support early detection of brain tumours in children prior to it showing up in clinical settings and even before a woman may know she is pregnant?

A: Yes, I know. There's been some very good information that's released around the signs and symptoms of brain tumours and certainly when it comes to early diagnosis of brain tumours for children, for adults, for expectant mothers, which is sometimes

you hear stories of expectant mothers being diagnosed with brain tumours and children of course too. It's the leading cause of death in children. It's succeeded leukemia, so we're now at that point where more children are being diagnosed with brain tumours and passing away now more than ever before. So, this information will make people more aware, and gives an opportunity to educate on the signs and symptoms, which may mean that people will be diagnosed earlier. And certainly, being diagnosed earlier can have a great impact on how someone does following treatment, so that's a really good question, it's important that the information about education, raising awareness, and that people do get diagnosed earlier if that's the case.

Q: What excites you the most about this registry?



A: The most exciting thing for me from this is that we've been able to do it. The Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada has been working towards this day for over 12 years. So, knowing that there was a need for this data, to support the community and to support research, we've known this for a very long time, so we've been working on it. What really excites me is that brain tumour patients in Canada now can have their own data, and we know that more works needs to be done. And more reports to come out as we reached this milestone. It's been a long time coming.



PATIENTS HELP BRING NEW UROLOGY EQUIPMENT TO SCARBOROUGH HEALTH NETWORK



Urology Tower

Thanks to Dr. Allan Toguri's tireless dedication to his patients, and their generous donations in honour of his exceptional care, the urology operating room at Scarborough Health Network's General hospital is now home to a brand-new KARL STORZ video tower.

A member of the SHN family for more than 30 years, Dr. Toguri is a veteran urologist who has always strived to achieve the absolute best for his patients—and he was determined to achieve it. After identifying the need for certain urology equipment in partnership with SHN Foundation, Dr. Toguri and his patients were able to fund the purchase of the video tower.

"My patients recognized that we need their support – to update hospital equipment, and continue providing the best care possible," said Dr. Toguri. "We can't do it alone."

The KARL STORZ video tower is used for a wide array of urology endoscopic procedures such as cystoscopy, transurethral resection of prostate (TUR), ureterorenoscopy and laparoscopic procedures. Judy To, an SHN urology specialty resource nurse,

says that the video tower will provide "shorter procedure time, more accurate diagnosis, and safer surgical intervention" for patients.

"It's inconceivable to perform these diagnostic or surgical procedures without this video system," said To, who has worked with Dr. Toguri since 1995. "It provides a crystal-clear image and also allows the surgeon the ability to customize the view to enhance the image in specific situations."

A reception was held on May 6 by SHN Foundation to celebrate the launch of the machinery to staff and physicians in the urology department.

"Equipment such as this could not have been purchased without dedicated physicians like Dr. Toguri, who truly inspire their patients and others in the community to come together and make a difference in Scarborough's health care," said Michael Mazza, President and CEO, SHN Foundation.

Learn more about how SHN Foundation is helping our hospitals to shape the future of care at SHNFoundation.ca.

From old addictions to new beginnings: SHN RAAM patient paints the colour back into her life

When Kimberly Humphrey thinks about what Scarborough Health Network's (SHN) Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic means to her, her eyes instantly well up with tears.

"The RAAM Clinic gave me my life back," said the long-time Scarborough resident.

It was an arduous road to recovery for the 52-year-old, who was first prescribed opioid medications to manage severe pain following a series of five surgeries within two years. After years of using the highly addictive medication, it became evident to Kimberly that she was struggling with a serious addiction and needed help.

"I was in a fog and I never left my house. I knew I had a problem with the drugs, but I didn't care because I needed them to deal with the pain."

She recalls an important appointment with her family doctor that ultimately changed the course of her life.

"My family doctor, Dr. Jerry Somer, sat me down and told me that I couldn't continue doing what I was doing. He handed me a brochure about the RAAM Clinic and asked me if I would give it a try. I promised him I would."

RAAM provides barrier-free access to medical treatments and same-day counselling services on a walk-in basis to people who are struggling with alcohol, opioid, or other substances. Through hospital and community-based partnerships, patients are better able reintegrate back into the community with ongoing supports.

With the help of addiction counsellor Shiraz Nuraddin and the RAAM team, Kimberly was able to gain control of her opioid use within two weeks. She credits all of the clinic's staff and doctors for kick-starting her success, and continues to access RAAM services that tremendously improve her quality of life.

"The team is great at providing personalized care," she said. "They let me vent on the days I need to vent and support me without judgment. They give me that extra boost of confidence whenever I need it and the staff is the reason I keep coming back."

For Shiraz, ensuring every person who comes in feels welcomed, comfortable, and understood is a top priority.

"The approach of everyone on our team – from our psychotherapists, to our registered nurse, to our physicians, is to provide warm, patient-centred, trauma-informed, and compassionate care," said Shiraz. "It is incredible to witness Kimberly's journey towards recovery and wellness through the interdisciplinary approach we take here."

Besides rediscovering a sense of purpose and belonging through recovery, Kimberly has rekindled a lifelong passion she abandoned because of her addiction. She proudly displays a painting depicting two hummingbirds against a bright blue sky that she recently painted. For Kimberly, the hummingbirds represent new beginnings.

Located at SHN's General hospital, the RAAM Clinic celebrated its first anniversary on May 1. Since opening its doors last year, the clinic has helped nearly 600 patients – with 98% saying they would recommend RAAM to a friend. If you think RAAM may be right for you, drop by or give us a call.



Kimberly Humphrey and Shiraz Nuraddin

RAAM clinic

SHN General hospital

3050 Lawrence Ave. E., Scarborough
Crockford Pavilion, Ground floor

Hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays, &
Fridays, 9 to 11 a.m.

Phone: 416-431-8269

Fax: 416-431-8291

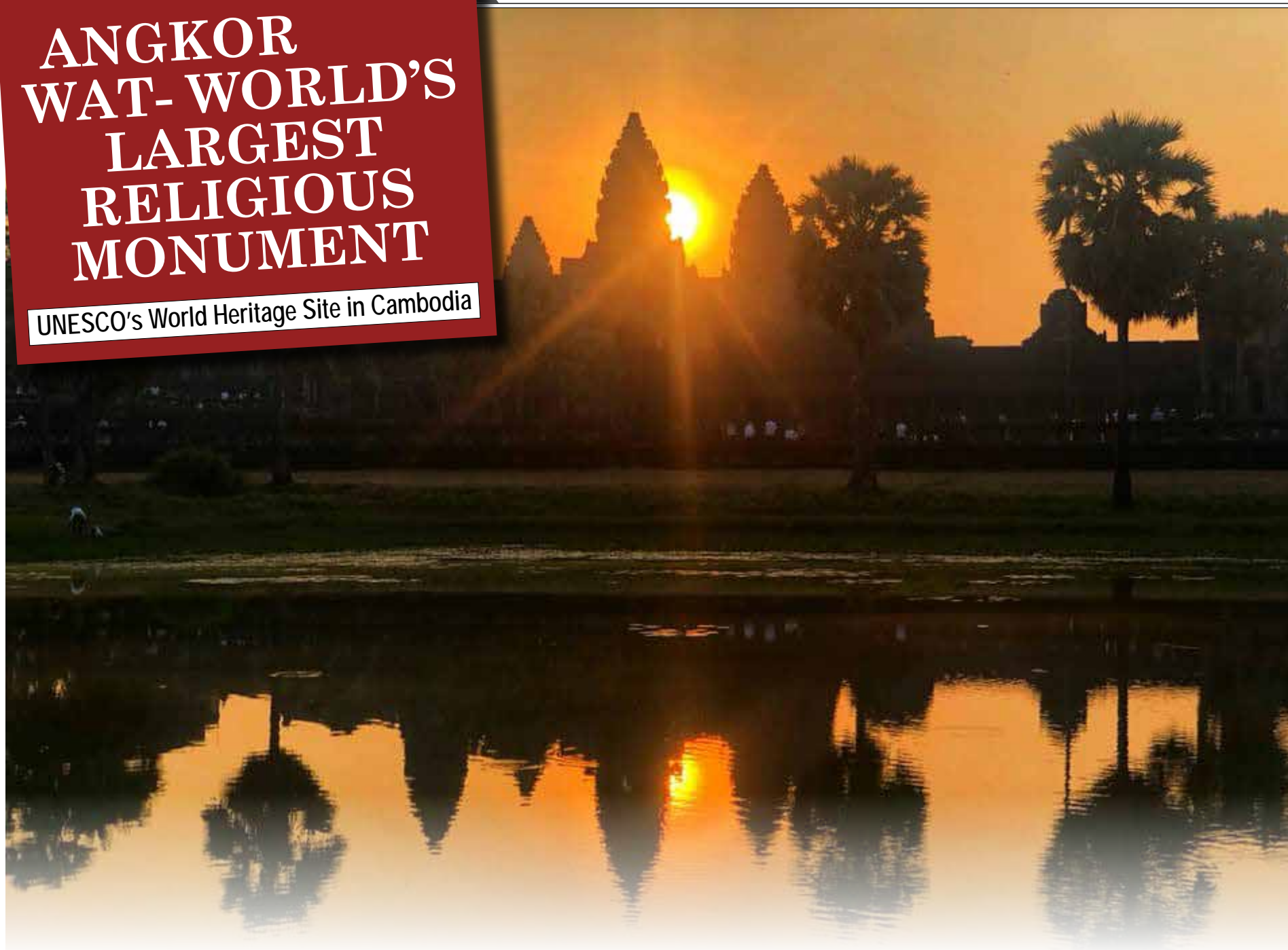
RAAM@shn.ca



Special Feature

ANGKOR WAT- WORLD'S LARGEST RELIGIOUS MONUMENT

UNESCO's World Heritage Site in Cambodia



C. Kamalaharan

I was longing for a visit to Cambodia since I heard about Angkor Wat the largest religious monument in the world. My ardent desire became a reality when I visited the heritage site on 22.05.2019. Arriving at Siem Reap the most popular tourist destination and the gateway to the Angkor region we settled in one of the guesthouses and set forth in our quest to explore the historic site the following morning. On arrival at the main gate of Angkor Wat we set off on foot along the 820 feet causeway protected on either side by a moat (a 650 feet wide and 13 feet deep ditch filled with water) which also surrounds the Angkor Wat as a defence against attack.

Most tourists arrive early in the morning to view the stunning sunrise at Angkor Wat. For us too viewing the sunrise was the first item in our itinerary. After a lengthy walk along the causeway we climbed a flight of steps and entered the main complex. Proceeding further we went along the walkway all the way towards the left and arrived at the sunrise viewing site where a swarm of photographers at vantage points were busy focussing their cameras to capture the breathtaking sight. The spectacular sunrise on the peak of the main Angkor tower as the sky and the temple change colour was amazing. Also the photos taken from behind the pools presented fantastic images of Angkor Wat reflected in the water.

After viewing the dazzling sunrise we proceeded further through the courtyards and arrived at the main tower. It was a wearisome journey on foot along the pathway ascending and

descending stairways. Most stairways have railings for the tourist to get a firm grip. But a few stairways have no railings. It was on one such stairway I stumbled and landed on the ground with a thud. I wasn't seriously wounded only a few cuts and bruises. While strolling along we viewed beautiful carvings all-around on the walls, pillars and roofs. Historical events and stories from mythology are carved in detail. Owing to ageing I stayed back while the others climbed the main tower along the steep stairs which appeared scary.



The central tower

Angkor Wat was built on 200 hectares land by Suryavarman11 breaking away from the Saiva tradition of the previous kings and installed a statue of Vishnu

in the central tower. The statue is not to be found there now instead idols in the form of Lingam are seen there. Building Angkor Wat was a Herculean task right from the start. Clearing, quarrying, earth - moving and transporting would have been backbreaking manual labour. Artistic carvings on the walls, pillars and ceilings done to perfection would also have been strenuous and time consuming. Thousands of labourers and herds of elephants would have been engaged at one time to complete the massive project. It's a real wonder that such a gigantic project was successfully undertaken in the absence of the present day sophisticated machineries such as cranes, earthmovers, bulldozers and tractors. Scholars are of the view that to complete such a massive project it would have taken several decades. Listed as UNESCO World Heritage Site there were about 50 Hindu and Buddhist temples during the 12th century within the expansive Angkor Archaeological Park. There were also more than one thousand unlisted temples in Angkor area.



Shivalingam

I have listed a few more important temples tourists flock in large numbers to explore.

Angkor Thom



Thevars on the right and Asuras on the left Churning of the Ocean of Milk at Angkor Wat

Angkor Thom was the last great capital of Khmer empire. Measuring more than 10 square km in size this fortified city has 8 metre high walls and a surrounding moat to keep invaders at bay while enclosing the residences of the priests, royal and military officials. There are 5 entry gates to the city. Overlooking the gateway are large towers topped with 4 huge faces



pointing in all directions. The entry into Angkor Thom is through the south gate. Along the causeway on either side of the walls are 54 large figures of 'Thevars' on the right and an equal number of large figures of 'Asuras' on the left. These monumental figures of 'Thevars' and 'Asuras' represent the Churning of the Ocean of Milk, a popular Hindu mythology explaining the origin of the drink of immortality. The scene depicting the Churning of the Ocean of Milk is carved on the walls in many Angkor temples including the temple complex of Angkor Wat.

Bayon temple

It's a richly decorated Khmer temple built by a Buddhist king Jayavarman V11 as the state temple of Angkor during the end of the 12th century. The most distinguishing feature is the carvings of the serene smiling faces on each side of the many towers. All the smiling faces with eyes closed indicate the all-knowing state of inner peace. During the reign of Jayavarman V111 in the midst of the 13th century the Khmer empire reverted to Hinduism. But during the later centuries Buddhism became the dominant religion.



Serene smiling faces on the towers

Ta Prohm temple

Built in the Bayon style during the late 12th century the temple was well-known for huge trees and massive roots growing out of the walls. Unlike the other monuments of Angkor this temple had been engulfed by the impenetrable dense jungle. It has been left untouched by archaeologists except for the clearing of the path for tourists and structural strengthening to prevent further collapsing. Massive roots of towering trees grew over the large protective walls and terraces of the temple while intertwined branches and dense foliage formed a roof over the structures. Owing to the weight the structures had crumbled. This temple became popular after it was featured in the adventure movie 'The Tom Raider'. The earlier temples in Angkor were Hindu temples dedicated to Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. But Ta Prohm is a Buddhist temple as king Jeyavarman V11 who built it was a follower of Buddhism.



Massive roots grew over the walls and terraces of the temples

Banteay Srei temple



Pink temple with floral designs

This is the only temple to have been built by a Brahmin instead of a king during the 10th century. Dedicated to Lord Shiva the temple is also known as pink temple because of the rose coloured sand stone used to build it. The walls of the temple are carved with attractive designs, divine figures depicting episodes from Ramayana. Considered as the art gallery of Angkor this small temple has some of the finest ever carvings seen. The three dimensional carvings lures every tourist. This neglected temple was rediscovered by French Archaeologists in 1914.

The River of Thousand Lingams in Siem Reap



The thousand Lingams in the river

This river of Thousand Lingams flows down into the Siem Reap river which in turn continues to flow into Tonle Sap the largest lake in Cambodia. This river is in the northeast of Angkor Wat. To reach there it's a half-day trip. While flowing over the Lingams the water gets sanctified. Besides the Lingams there are also carvings of Shiva, Brahma, Lakshmi, Vishnu and Rama spread under the water all along the river. It was a spiritual awakening for us as we walked through the jungle along the river viewing the Lingams and carvings of Hindu idols.

Owing to long period of invasion, war and earthquake Angkor Wat had been hidden. Furthermore prolong periods of drought followed by incessant rains led to excessive flooding resulting in widespread damages to the city's infrastructure which later collapsed. Owing to widespread devastation for ages all the temples were completely engulfed by the overgrown thick foliage of the widely spreading trees. As a result the temples remained unknown to the outside world for indefinite periods.

The site was rediscovered in the 1840s during the French colonial rule by the French explorer Henri Mouhot

who described the site as "Grandeur than anything left to us by Greece and Rome". It took several years to expose the temple clearing the trees inside and outside the temple. Cambodia having suffered from a long civil war and the authoritarian rule of Khmer Rouge a few decades ago is now thriving to develop its economy. Textile and tourism are the two largest industries in Cambodia while the main source of income is agriculture for the 80% of the country's population living in rural areas. Rice is Cambodia's major crop. In addition mango, cashew, corn, durian and vegetables are cultivated on a large scale.

The main currency for transaction in Cambodia is the dollar. Prices in hotels, restaurants, shops, taxis, buses and airlines are quoted in US dollars. Cambodia's currency riel is used only for small transactions (less than a dollar) at the rate of 1US dollar equivalent to 4000 Cambodian riel. I have heard vendors asking for dollars while selling their products, "Take one young coconut give one dollar", they would say in colloquial English.

The only language spoken in Cambodia is Khmer and all name boards and information are only in the Khmer language. In places where foreign tourists visit English translation is provided. I have met people residing in rural areas speaking only Khmer. The only English words they speak are "Thank you, bye bye". As Khmer is the only language spoken in Cambodia and 97% of the people are Buddhists conflicts among the people based on language and religion never arose.

Floating villages

After visiting the important temples in Angkor we embarked on a cruising trip along the Tonle Sap Lake. Arriving at Chong Kneas the closest village to Siem Reap we were amazed to see some houses and buildings floating on water while some other houses resting on tall stilts to enable the occupants to keep themselves dry during wet seasons. The people living in floating villages travel to floating schools and eat at floating restaurants. The floating villages move along the lake during high tide to favourable places and return to their original places during low tide. We enjoyed cruising in a motor boat along the coastline of the lake viewing the scenic beauty all around and the life of the people residing in coastal areas and in floating villages.



Floating restaurant



Floating school

During my visit to Angkor region what struck me most was the presence of large number of fruit bearing Palmyra palms all over Cambodia especially around Angkor Wat temple. On inquiry I was told that Palmyra products are used extensively as we do in our native country. Toddy is fermented and distilled to arrack or it is concentrated to a crude sugar jaggery (karupaddi). The seeds are planted and the sprouting stems below the surface are boiled and eaten (panagkilangu) or roasted and eaten (odial). The leaves are used for thatching, making mats, baskets, fans, umbrellas and hats. The sturdy trunk is used in carpentry. The jelly part of the fruit is the kernel (nongu) which is eaten raw or cooked.



Angkor Wat is no longer an active temple but serves as an important tourist destination filling the coffers of the country which was severely ravaged a few decades ago. It was a memorable visit for us to explore the religious sites that remained in wilderness for a long period unknown to the external world. It was rediscovered and revamped into an attractive tourist destination where one could see milling crowds of tourists arriving daily from all corners of the world. A trip worthwhile undertaken.





Take it or Leave it

The Seeds of Good

Every human being has something good to contribute.

We each have the potential to do good or cause harm. So, we must plant the right seeds. You can grow something truly beautiful when you nurture the good in you

Every human being has something to offer; every human being has something to contribute which is good. We have in us bad, and we have in us good.

A field, if not taken care of, will grow something! It won't be edible—it'll be weeds—but it will grow something. Plant the seeds of good; nurture the good, and you could grow beautiful fruits, beautiful flowers, beautiful vegetables.

Every single human being carries this potential in them. We don't recognize our potential—all we look at is "good: bad, good: bad." Is today according to my wishes? Then, "Thank you, Lord." If it is not according to my wishes? "What have I done wrong? Why do you punish me?"

And this is what the whole world does. The whole world does this. Look



at this...look at this world today. There are people who hate each other! Why? Why? Why? I ask, "Why?"

What are you made out of? Seven-point-five billion people on the face of this earth are fundamentally made out of very simple things: calcium, carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, phosphorus, and nitrogen. Ninety-nine percent of a human being is made out of these six things.

All of us...all of us have the same fundamental needs. We need oxygen to breathe; we need water; we need food, and we need warmth. We need oxygen; without oxygen we will die very

quickly. Without water, a few days, maybe two days, three days.... Without warmth, a few hours.... Without food, maybe, maybe a week, two weeks.... Everywhere, it's exactly the same!

But what divides us? When we are all the same, nature does not see the difference. Male? Man, made out of the same thing. Woman, made out of the same thing. Then why the differences? I know where the differences are! Right here, in our ideas! Not in our hearts—in our ideas. And this is where the problems are.

– Prem Rawat



Rwanda and Sri Lanka – *A Tale of Two Genocides*

Authors: Sharry Aiken, Associate Professor of Law, Queen's University, Ontario and Cheran Rudhramoorthy, Associate Professor, University of Windsor

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide and the 10th year since the Tamil genocide in Sri Lanka. While the 1994 Rwandan genocide has become part of the world's collective memory, the 2009 Tamil genocide has not.

Mullivaikkal Genocide Remembrance Day on May 18, named after the village that was the site of cataclysmic violence, is a day to remember those who died in the Sri Lankan conflict. Mullivaikkal commemoration events have been taking place around the world this month.

However, 10 years and a series of United Nations reports and resolutions have made little progress toward truth, accountability or reparations for the survivors of atrocity crimes in Sri Lanka. In the aftermath of the recent Easter Sunday bombings, the spectre of ethnic violence has resurfaced.



Sharry Aiken, Associate Professor of Law, Queen's University

ances carried out by the Sri Lankan security forces were daily occurrences. The LTTE was condemned for its suicide bombings and forcible recruitment of child soldiers.

For most of the 2000s, the LTTE was operating as a de facto state in the north and east. By early 2009, military losses had gradually crushed the



Cheran Rudhramoorthy, Associate Professor, University of Windsor

war to an end. The Sri Lankan government celebrated its successful "humanitarian rescue operation." In fact, it was genocide.

By August 2009, Britain's Channel 4 News was broadcasting gruesome footage of summary executions and rape perpetrated by Sri Lankan soldiers. Dozens of surrendering Tamils,

deliberately hidden and dubbed the "war without witness."

In both cases, the UN and the European Union had direct warnings but opted against taking action. The international community's inertia in Rwanda and Sri Lanka has been acknowledged as "grave failures."

The establishment of an international criminal tribunal was an explicit attempt to grapple with Rwanda's past. Convictions were secured in the cases of 61 "ringleaders." A groundbreaking decision on sexual violence as an act of genocide was among its many rulings. Local "gacaca courts" conducted some two million trials. A truth commission continues efforts to promote reconciliation between the Hutu and Tutsi peoples.

While highly imperfect, these transitional justice mechanisms have generated a record of what really happened and why it happened.

In contrast, Sri Lanka has repeatedly reneged on pledges to investigate and prosecute war-time atrocity crimes. Abductions, torture in custody and sexual violence remain rampant amid a long history of failed promises.

Occupied land not returned

The harassment of Tamil activists as well as targeted violence against the Muslim community continue. Commitments to demilitarize and return occupied land are unfulfilled. Weak state structures, the lack of an independent judiciary and a culture of impunity remain significant obstacles.

As Harvard University scholar Martha Minow suggests, the relentless repetition of atrocity requires a pathway between "too much forgetting" and "too much memory," between vengeance and forgiveness. In Sri Lanka today, memory and memorialization are radical counterpoints to official state narratives that resist accounting for the past.

Holocaust survivor Primo Levi once said:

"It happened; therefore, it can happen again; it can happen everywhere."

So long as impunity and the failure to address the root causes of atrocity crimes continue in Sri Lanka, lasting peace will remain elusive. Acknowledging the past must be a precondition to meaningful reconciliation.

A poem in Cheran's anthology *In a Time of Burning* evokes the challenge of closure in the wake of mass violence:

"there is neither sea nor wind for us to dissolve the ashes proclaim an end and close our eyes."

(Courtesy: *The Conversation*, an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts)



The Rwandan genocide offers important lessons for Sri Lanka.

Tutsis slaughtered

An estimated 800,000 Tutsis and politically moderate Hutu were killed in just 100 days in 1994. Thousands more were subjected to sexual violence and tortured in a systematic campaign by the Hutu ethnic majority.

Fifteen years later, another slaughter unfolded — this time in northern Sri Lanka. The protracted civil war between the national government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was coming to a catastrophic end. The goal of an independent state for the minority Tamils was slipping away.

Throughout the conflict, both sides failed to respect human rights and international humanitarian law. Unlawful killings and enforced disappear-

ances carried out by the Sri Lankan security forces were daily occurrences. The LTTE was condemned for its suicide bombings and forcible recruitment of child soldiers.

For most of the 2000s, the LTTE was operating as a de facto state in the north and east. By early 2009, military losses had gradually crushed the

Carnage unfolded

Transatlantic cellphone photos and a few video clips had begun circulating with images of the unfolding carnage. Hospitals on the front lines were systematically shelled, as were food distribution lines and even Red Cross ships attempting to evacuate the wounded.

Within a few months, a brutal siege of the officially declared "safe zone" and the indiscriminate shelling of Tamil civilians concentrated there brought the

including senior Tiger political leaders and their families, had been shot dead by soldiers as they walked out of the safe zone hoisting white flags.

In 2012, the UN Secretary General estimated that 40,000 civilians were killed over the final five months of the conflict. The exact number, as in many conflict situations, remains contested and is likely higher.

Once the conflict ended, hundreds of thousands of Tamils were interned in squalid camps in the northern Vanni region. Even today, thousands of Tamils remain displaced in their own country.

'War without witness'

If the Rwandan genocide was a genocide foretold, yet no action was ever taken by the international community, then the Tamil genocide was



Special Feature

Tax Conference by SAAC

Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada (SAAC) had its 2nd tax conference on May 04th at Sheraton Hotel, Markham. More than 120 accountants participated in this conference. During the conference, the following topics were covered by prominent tax experts; Income Tax updates, GST/HST updates, Structuring a business to meet tax objectives, how to structure a sale of a business in a tax efficient manner, etc. Some photos from the conference can be seen here.



Five Hundred million rupees allocated for North-East development in Sri Lanka under "Palmyrah Fund"

Provision for direct investment in the fund from the expatriate community will be allowed

By Siva Sivapragasam

A sum of five-hundred million is to be allocated by the Sri Lankan Government for the development of the North-East regions which had been badly affected by the thirty year old civil war. The allocation has been named as the "Palmyrah Development Fund" and a sum of 250 million has already been included in the current 2019 budget. There is also provision for direct investment from the Tamil expatriate community in the future.

The fund was inaugurated at a ceremony held in the Prime Minister's official residence at Temple Trees recently. Among those present at the function were Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, TNA Leader Sampanthan, Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera, State Minister Harsha De Silva and Education State Minister Vijayakala Maheswaran.

The finance from the fund will be primarily utilized for the re-settlement of the people in the North-East regions, raising the standards of living, housing, agriculture, construction work and other allied de-



velopment fields. Finance Minister Mangala Samaraweera stated at the event that the fund will be open for contribution from donors and the diaspora.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe stated that the government would introduce legislation to give effect to the 'Palmyrah Development Fund' established to fast-track development efforts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, particularly conflict-affected areas.

Speaking at the function, TNA leader Rajavarthayam Sampanthan emphasized that development along with political solution to the community should go hand in hand simultaneously.



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Special Feature

Bend It Like Beckham the musical

By Harrish Thirukumaran

May 8, 2019

On May 7, 2019, a press conference was held to launch the promotion of Bend it like a Beckham the Musical at the IN5 Experium. As the name suggests, the production is based on the 2002 hit film about a girl from a traditional Indian family looking to follow her dreams in soccer. The announcement of the musical was made by Gurinder Chadha, the critically acclaimed director, producer and screenwriter behind the film, and Corey Ross, founder and CEO of Starvox Entertainment.

Considered a cultural ambassador for the Punjabi, Sikh and South Asian communities abroad, Gurinder Chadha has been lauded for her films and how they speak on the immigrant experience. She chose Toronto, Canada to announce this project because it is a great city that celebrates and embraces diversity. The musical, like the movie, is an extension of that celebration of diversity. It also speaks on the balance in families between traditions of older generation and new ideas of the younger generation.

In the past, there was a hardline between either side, but these days, especially in Great Britain, there seems to be a middle ground being fostered by a third generation. The beauty of the original film was that it helped both parents and kids have discussions on how you actually integrate and find language to stay together as families, while also finding opportunities to express yourself in new countries.

The musical will make its debut here in Toronto, Ontario in December 2019. It will be at the Bluma Appel Theatre. The exact dates will be December 7 to December 24, which is just before the holiday season. Tickets will be available at BendItMusical.com.

The most important message to the Desi community in this respect would be to visit the site for the group discounts. 25% discounts are available to those who go as families, as emphasized by Chadha, because it is important that people from the community are seen in these theatres, so more stories and shows are made that cater to this community.

Corey Ross heads a fast-growing production company in the live entertainment space that has proudly worked on the Bend It Musical for over two years. Interest in the film went back to 2015 for Ross, highlighting that it was a wonderful experience seeing the musical in London during a vacation with his family. It won the Best Musical Critics Circle Award in Britain, sparking an interest on bringing it to Toronto due to its rich multicultural market.

It would be a wonderful opportunity for Canadian actors, especially Desi actors. They began putting together a plan to bring it to Toronto by partnering with TO Live, the new amalgamated Toronto theatres. This is the first project that the company has partnered on. From Toronto, the show will be taken as a tour to places like Broadway.

Gurinder Chadha decided to make the sports-based film into a musical because it is was the first film ever to be distributed in every country in the world, including North Korea. "It means that it was picked up, treasured, and loved by everybody, regardless of whether their Indian or not," said Chadha. That uni-

versal story, really, for Chadha, inspired her to turn it into a musical. It's a very emotional movie when watching it. For instance, the dad's story is very powerful. Furthermore, by adding songs and music to the dad's story, mother's story, and girls' story, everything gets elevated as it becomes more emotional. Although the movie is great, Chadha states she thinks the musical is much better in retelling the story from the film, but with a different experience.

In terms of casting for the Canadian production, a local casting process has just begun in Toronto, with Chadha having already met some actors. Auditions will begin on May 26th to provide for roles including the big Indian family in the show. Any actors that may not be found in Toronto will be brought from London, but there is a firm belief that talent is present in Toronto. She is unsure as to whether she'll cast the lead actress from the original film, saying that Jess may be found in Brampton.

On the prospect of regionalizing the script or adjusting it based on the cast, Chadha noted that the musical is pretty universal like the film. The film could have taken place anywhere in the world. They've found that you do not have to adapt the film locally. There was one aspect of it where it was local in London. Really, however, it is a universal story about a mom and dad who want their daughter to behave the way they wanted and playing football doesn't look nice as the mom says. She needs to learn to cook and make round rotis, even though the daughter has a different dream for herself.

So, it is a show about dreams, and what the parent's generation wanted for themselves, but weren't able to have, but now they have the opportunity to hold the door back to protect their daughter or let her fly.

Chadha initially did not know the launch event for the musical would be at the IN5 Experium, but she knew she wanted to visit the exhibition. There was a synergy here, and it was really an auspicious blessing because there was no other better place to launch the musical. At the end of the day, the musical is very much based on Sikh values of bettering yourself and taking your community with you. That's what Jess wants to do.

The main takeaway for a South Asian audience would be pride, thorough entertainment in a voice and style that you can relate to or never seen on stage and are touched and moved by that story because it's your story and everyone else's story. For non-South Asian audiences, it celebrates humanity in a time where inhumane things were happening. Bend it Like Beckham came out straight after 9/11, and there were people in North America who did not know the difference between Sikhs and Muslims. Chadha got numerous letters from Sikhs saying "thank you for showing us that we're different" and "who we are."

It is important that we tell stories that unite us and give a sense of empowerment as a community, as girls, as sons and daughters, but also as parents. As a non-South Asian, Ross highlighted that you are immersed in a different world, with characters you can relate to, a story that touches you, and ultimately a very fun and wonderful evening for all.

Some images of the UK production can be seen here.

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FRIENDS



By Kumar Punithavel

Shanthi was driving south on Warden Avenue and turned left into Ellesmere Road. Her dad Perumal said very loud, "Lucky you did not hit the lorry. You almost collided and both of us would have died on the spot". Shanthi was greatly annoyed and angry. She thought to herself that recently her dad has become critical with every one. He was finding fault in everyone and was very negative with life as a whole.

Shanthi always cared and loved her dad. He was not like this before. He was always been a caring loving person whom not only his friends and relatives but even Shanthi's had high regards for Perumal. The year Perumal retired his wife died, and he was lonely. He lost all interest in living. Shanthi brought him down to live with her.

Shanthi was his only child. When Perumal came to Canada he came with his wife and only daughter Shanthi. He had to do two jobs as his wife had to take care of the baby. He insisted his wife should take care of his daughter and stay at home. In the day time he did a courier job and, in the nights, he did delivery of news paper. Perumal used to say jokingly that in day times he spends more time seated on a vehicle than sleeping on his bed. He life revolved around his family. When he lost his job and his wife at the same time, he was like a kite without a string going here and there without a reason or destiny. It was the cause for his irritation.

Though Shanthi loved and respected her farther dearly, it was too much to put up with his irritation. She said, "Dad can you please leave me alone, I am driving correctly and you know that" she said. She did not want to say anything to further irritate him.

Previously Perumal was not like this, only recently he has been like this. When asked the family doctor he referred Perumal to a psychiatrist, however he told them losing of wife and the job in such short interval has made him a little stressed, but he should be ok soon. However, the psychiatrist gave medication for Perumal sleep in the night. He also suggested if he moved to a new location it would help him to forget the past and start living.

Shanthi and Balan who already had an idea to move away from the Condo she owned and buy a house decided this would be an added incentive to make the move. They bought a house in Oshawa and moved there. She had come with her father to the Scarborough Civic mall to buy curtains for her new house. It was unfortunate for Shanthi that she can't leave her father at home, but driving with him was also not pleasant.

One day at a shopping mall came across one of her secondary school class mate Suresh after many many years. After secondary school it is not new to children go in different paths pursuing different carriers. Shanthi pursued in accounting at York University, while joined Queens University to pursue in Medical field. It is more than a decade since last, they had met. After initial exchange of greetings, the friends decided to grab a coffee and sat down for a chitchat. While both were updating the whereabouts of mutual friends,

Suresh mentioned that he is working as a doctor in Elizabeth hospital in the mental health division.

Casually Suresh inquired about Shanthi's father, "How is Perumal Uncle doing?". Shanthi with a heavy heart replied, "He is a good patient for you". With great concern Suresh inquired, "What do you mean Shanthi?". She replied, "In the same month he retired my mother too died. From then onwards he is acting indifferent to life. Finding fault in everything, I can see he has lots of anger in his heart. I took to a psychiatrist doctor for consultation and he suggested there was nothing is wrong in him. May be change of place might help him, and I moved to Oshawa buying a new house but nothing has changed.

Suresh could not believe what he heard. His memory of Uncle was a happy jovial person, and he had lot of respect for him. He asked, "Shanthi do you have a pet at home?"

"No, but why?" she replied with a question. "Many times, the peace of mind that cannot be provided by people and medicines can be provided by a pet. Why don't you get a pet from a pet sanctuary? Let it not be a very big one or a very small one. He is stressed because wonders what is the purpose of continuing living. He was a very hard-working person, and we friends used to admire him" said Suresh.

The same day evening after discussing with her husband, both agreed it is great to have a pet in the house. The following Saturday morning Shanthi got the pet shop phone number and called them. Because it was a Saturday they were asked to come before four in the evening. If they do not like the dogs in the shop, they could leave their requirement and phone number and they would if they come across one.

After lunch when they prepared to go to the pet place she asked her father to join them to select the dog, his immediate response was, "Why do you want a dog now? Am I not here 27/7 in the house watching it?" "We want to buy a dog as a company and protection to you" said Shanthi. He protested, "I don't need any dog, don't waste the money". "Then shall I buy a cat?" was the response Shanthi gave. He retorted angrily, "We don't need any animal here. I will look after myself and the house". He turned back and walked home.

The pound was very quiet when they reached it. Some animals were in the cages while others were in gated pens playing. When they walked up to a fence of the pen a bushy black dog came up to them and wagged its tail. The dog sat on a crawling position and wagged its tail as if welcoming. Shanthi looked at her husband, and saw he too was taken up by the dog. Shanthi asked the care taker what was the name of the dog.

He replied, "This is a very old dog. Look at its mustache, its graying. You know some ungrateful people breed a nice dog and when it gets old will abandon them in a far-off place. These domesticated animals would have lost its survival skills and suffer a slow death. This dog was brought in here by some good Samaritan. If you will promise me you will look after till its death, I will give it free to you". He said.

"What is the dog's name?" asked Shanthi. As I told you it was a stray dog. Let us wait a week to see if

any one come to claim. If not, it is yours. We do not know its name but we call him Buddy, as he is a friend of everyone. If no one comes we will have to put it to sleep. It is yours if you will take care of it", he said. "I promise you good Lord will bless you for saving its life" he said with emotion.

They walked up to the car and Shanthi opened the back door and said, "Come Buddy". It must have been familiar with car rides, it just ran and jumped into the rear seat, and sat ready for the ride. As Balan pulled the car, Buddy looked out through the window and barked twice at the care taker. He too waved his as if saying bye to his friend.

Driving the car Balan said, "This dog must have done many rides in a car in the past". When they reached home, Shanthi got out of the car and said, "Come Buddy". It jumped out and sat in crawling position watching both as if asking what is next.

Hearing the noise Perumal opened the front door walked out. Seeing him Buddy ran up to him and sat in front of in all fours and looked up at him wagging its tail. "Where did you by this black beast? How much money was thrown in the ditch", he said. "Dad this an orphan dog, in fact they gave it free. If we had not brought it they would have put it to sleep. If we don't like him, they wanted us to bring him back", said Shanthi.

"Do whatever you want", said Perumal and walked back to his room and closed the door behind him. The dog followed him and slept at the door step. Shanthi spread an old blanket for it to sleep. She also put a bowl of water too.

In a couple of days Perumal and Buddy became great friends. In the morning and evening Perumal took Buddy for a walk. In Oshawa neighbourhood, Perumal and Buddy couple were very famous. Whether it is in the neighbourhood grocery store or barber saloon or laundry the inseparable couple will be seen together.

After a week Buddy's sleeping mattress moved to Perumal's room by the bedside. There was a great change in Perumal too. He started to laugh and interact with everyone. There was a spring in his walk. Shanthi and Balan were very happy for him.

Few months latter in the middle of the night Shanthi heard someone knocking on door. There was no barking, hence it can't be a thief she thought. She woke up Balan and ask him to check what the noise was. When he opened the door there was Buddy whining. It walked to Perumal's room and Balan followed.

When Shanthi switched on the light Buddy sat in all fours in crawling position and looking at Perumal's face started whining. Perumal was lying with closed eyes and was not breathing. He must have died peacefully in sleep.

A week later Buddy was seen dead on its sleeping mattress. It too died in sleep. Shanthi said, "Amma must have sent Buddy to overcome the loneliness".

Love and empathy is not only for humans but for the animals realized Shanthi and Balan. In their new house guest room hung two large pictures. It was that of Perumal and Buddy the two permanent host to all guests.



Take adequate preparations to avoid danger



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By: Jesudason John Aputharajah

*“Varumunnar kavaathan vazlkkai, erimunnar,
Vaithuuru pol kedum”.*

The life of a man, who does not guard against untoward developments, will be like a haystack before an advancing fire. If an administrator does not plan well ahead in advance and carry out programmes foreseeing possible developments, he will have to expose himself to untold danger.

The recent happenings in Sri Lanka

are an example of such callous negligence. All intelligence reports should have been properly scrutinized and vigilant efforts should have been taken in the interests of the safety and security of the people and property. Faultless will be an administrator, who corrects himself before he goes on to point other's faults. In a similar vein the Bible speaks of the need to remove the beam from one's own eye, before taking note of and proceeding to remove a speck from the other person's eye.

The miser who does not put his money to legitimate and purposeful use will find his wealth decline and vanish. Avarice, which is the denial of all charitable inclinations in man, is not just a vice, it is the worst. Never indulge in self-praise, nor should you go in for activities that produce non good results.

An administrator should be vigilant enough to guard his secretive ventures to avoid the heinous machinations of his enemies.

*“Cheyat pala cheyya thevariyan chelvam,
Uyarpalathu anrik kedum”.*

(Kural: 437)

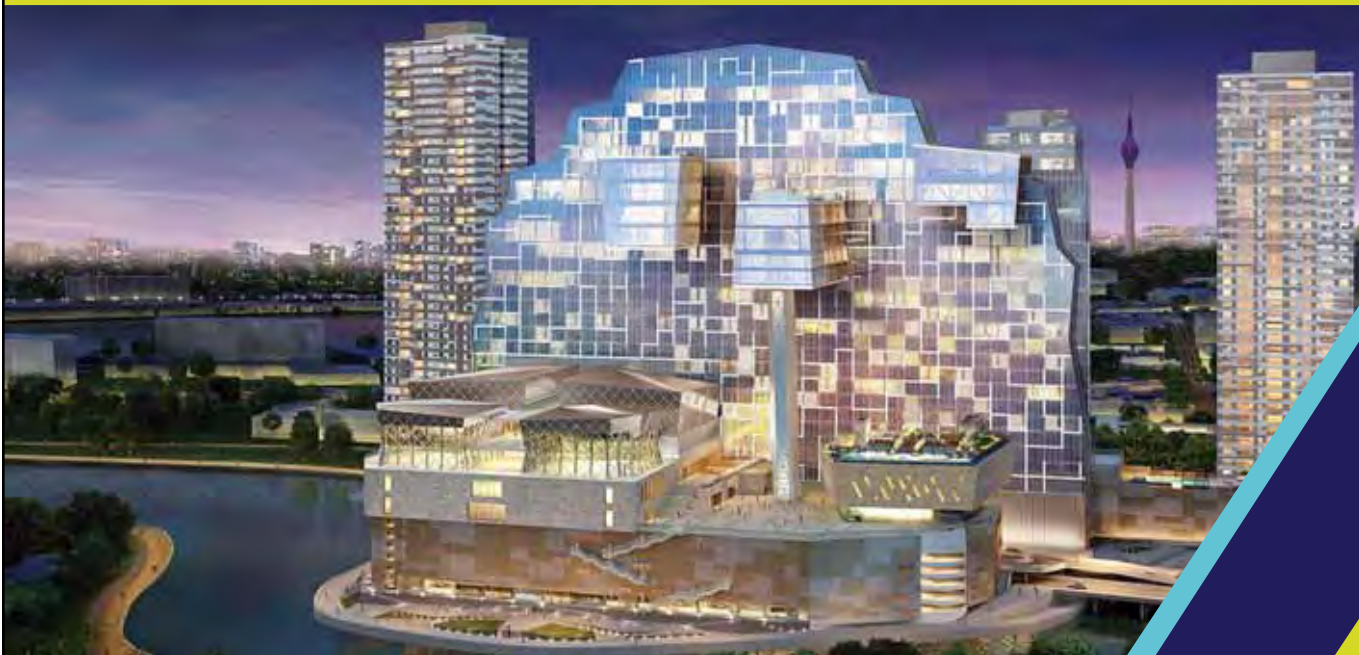


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CINNAMON LIFE LUXURY APARTMENTS IN COLOMBO

Representatives from leading property developer from Sri Lanka, John Keells Properties presented 2 mega condo developments, Cinnamon Life and TRI-ZEN in Toronto. The event was held on Sunday, March 31, 2019 at Toronto Airport Marriott Hotel with an evening of cocktails. The detailed presentation and explanation for answers was clear, precise and excellent by Nadeem Shums, Vice President of John Keells at the event. Cinnamon Life, the iconic 4.5 Million sq.ft integrated mixed use development, is a city within a city, and is envisioned to be the epicentre of modern South Asia. A perfect urban sanctuary, the luxury apartments in Colombo will feature the ideal blend of contemporary comfort and stylish sophistication.



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Who is My Hero?



By Abisha Amalan


Today, I am going to talk about who my hero is. I chose this topic because I have something interesting to tell you.

We have all heard about many heroes in the world. These people are considered heroes because they did something great to make something better. Of course, I appreciate all of those heroes, but if you ask me who my hero is, I would tell you that my heroes are my parents.

As a child, I need the help of someone who can guide me, look after me, and at the same time, make me happy. My mom is someone who always makes sure I am on the right track. She helps and guides me in my homework to make sure I understand everything. It is because of her that I am able to do well in school. Because of her guidance, I am considered one of the best students in my class.

Another hero who is equally important in my life is my dad. I learn lots of things from my dad, starting from how to be well behaved to how to treat others with respect. Whenever I need help, I always ask my dad. He is always willing to help me without asking for anything in return. He even prepares my favourite meals to enjoy.


Because of these two heroes in my life, I am able to grow up as a happy and smart girl. They teach me to become a better person every day, and I want to work hard to make my heroes proud.



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NEUROPLASTICITY PROVIDES MAGIC RECOVERY

New Research Recognizes How the Birth of New Neurons Can Reform the Brain

By: Uthayan Thurairajah



The brain is crucial to all by providing neuroplasticity. We can improve everything we think, talk and do. Neurofeedback works with these basic principles of neuroplasticity to help us to take control of our mind. People can recover after a traumatic brain injury, stroke, or other brain damage. Scientists have been hard at work studying precisely these cases over the last several decades, and have found the explanation behind the magic: neuroplasticity.

Benefits Neuroplasticity



There are several ways that neuroplasticity helps the brain. In addition to the developments and advantages outlined above, these are some of the other ways our brain profits from brain adjustment:

- 1) Ability to enhance memory and learning.
- 2) Ability to enhance wide range of cognitive functions.
- 3) Ability to rewire in the brain (e.g., if one area of the brain that controls one sense is damaged, other areas may be able to pick up the slack).
- 4) Losing function in one area may enhance capacities in other areas (e.g., if one sense is lost, the others may become heightened).
- 5) Recovery from traumatic brain damages.
- 6) Recovery from brain strokes.
- 7) Ability to recover anxiety, depression, chronic Pain, ADHD, OCD, & Autism

Neuroplasticity & Trauma



Research on neuroplasticity has grown in leaps and bounds from observing changes in the brains of those who suffered severe trauma. Scientists say that some patients with severe damage to the brain were able to recover to an incredible level, given the extent of the injury. It was admired how this was feasible, as we aware now, neuroplasticity is allowed this healing to happen.

There are three phases of neuroplasticity after injury according to researchers:

- 1) Immediately after the damage, neurons begin to die, and cortical inhibitory pathways are reduced. This period lasts one to two days and may open secondary neural networks that have never been

adopted or have been rarely utilized.

2) After a few days later, the movement of those cortical pathways shifts to excitatory from inhibitory and new synapses are developed; both neurons and other cells are hired to restore the damaged or dead cells and help to heal.

3) After a few weeks later, new synapses continue to appear, and the "remodeling" of the brain is in full swing. At this is the time, rehabilitation therapy can assist the brain with new pathways.

There are many pharmacological therapies currently in the rise to improve through neuroplasticity. There are therapies involving stem cells, modifying gene expression and cellular reproduction, controlling inflammatory responses, and growing immune cells to stop the damage. Although injury to the brain is a difficult thing to recover from, it is paradoxically one of the best times to take advantage of the brain's neuroplastic abilities, because post-injury or trauma is when the brain is most capable of making significant changes, reorganizing, and recovering (Su, Veeravagu, & Grant, 2016).

Neuroplasticity & Stroke

Neuroplasticity has been recognized quite often in those healing from strokes. Strokes usually leave patients with brain damage, ranging from mild (e.g., some facial muscular impairment) to harsh (e.g., severe cognitive impairments, memory problems). However, there is also astonishing rehabilitation from stroke victims.

According to the specialists at stroke-rehab.com, the best way to encourage neuroplasticity in stroke recovery is to use Task repetition & Task-specific practice methods. Learning a new skill or activity through specific, regular practice can result in notable changes in the brain. You may not be able to learn anything with repetition, but



you can certainly learn a lot and advances in one area can often spill over into improvements in other abilities and skills.

Neuroplasticity & Depression

The association between depression and neuroplasticity is good news or bad news. The bad news is when it comes to psychiatric complications, there is a sort of absent neuroplasticity. Depression can create damage to the brain, encouraging maladaptive and unhealthy pathways and inhibiting robust and adaptive ones (Hellerstein, 2011).

Some therapies for depression seem to be able to halt the destruction and perhaps even change. The study on neuroplasticity has shown us that "your day-to-day actions can have moderate effects on brain function and structure," which can offer healing and recovery from psychiatric disorders (Hellerstein, 2011). It may not be simple, and it will likely take sustained effort, but we can "remodel" our brains at any age in ways that can help us to function more effectively.

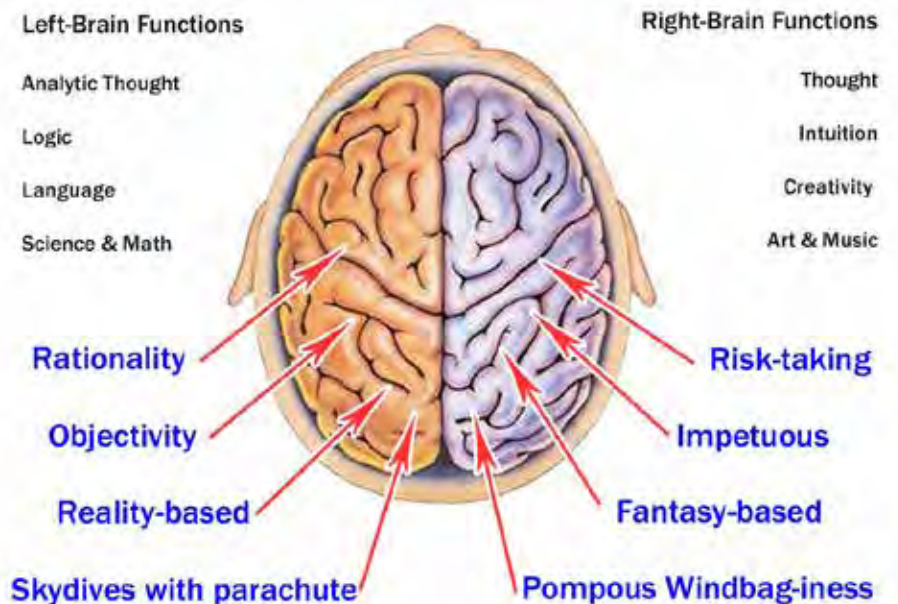
Neuroplasticity & Anxiety

The same principles apply to manage and tackling anxiety disorders—our brains are also well capable of rewiring and improvement in our ability to manage anxiety. However, as a clinician and life coach, Ian Cleary (2015) says:



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.

Left and Right Brain Functions



"Brain changes are at the cost of other changes. The construction of these sections of the brain effortlessly triggers anxiety. It is at the loss of the ones that aid calmness & confidence. It is not enough to stop anxiety at any given moment. The anxiety wirework is still there and expecting to be triggered. We may need to build competitive wiring. We need to build specific wiring of what we want to accomplish. Without this, we circle endlessly in anxiety with no neural pathway to take us forward."

Neuroplasticity can be used to help you manage, treat, and perhaps even "cure" anxiety, but it takes some time and effort! These more permanent brain changes can be achieved through adapting and changing thought patterns, through recall and memory, breathing exercises, eye patterning, modifying postural habits, increasing body awareness, and targeting sensory perception (Cleary, 2015).

Neuroplasticity & Chronic Pain

Neuroplasticity can also help people manage and treat chronic pain. The pain is experienced as a set or sequence of neuronal firings. If we can change the way our brains are wired, we can stop experiencing pain. Some methods that can help our brain adapt and manage chronic pain:

Neuroplasticity: It's time for a change.



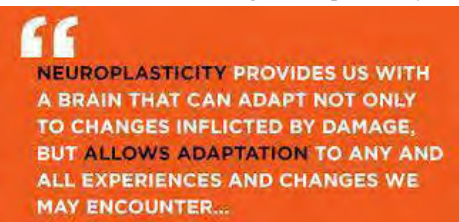
- 1) Transcranial direct current (DC) stimulation (electrodes implanted in some regions of the brain to stimulate specific responses)
- 2) Transcranial magnetic stimulation (magnetic stimulation of the brain via a "wand" to interlock particular areas)
- 3) Intermittent fasting (fasting followed by periods of regular food intake)
- 4) Glucose administration (take glucose supplements to restore what we lose; (Sibille, Reddy, Fillingim, Fartsch, & Keil, 2016)

In addition to the above, there are many things we can do to apply the principles of neuroplasticity to our experience of pain. The regular exercise, healthy eating, quitting smoking, Relaxation techniques, Mindfulness meditation, keeping our mind active, engaged, and challenged are the ac-



tivities have proven useful for dealing with chronic pain (Irving, 2016). They affect how our brain wiring translates the message of pain. Each of the practice has the potential to rewire and retrain our brain to react differently to painful feelings. Neuroplasticity for ADHD, OCD, & Autism

The methods of using neuroplasticity to



treat Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and autism mainly imitate the process we have used before.

Activities, games, and programs are designed for the systems of neuroplasticity to help with a wide range of impairments. However, all come down to the same general themes: learning new things, being open to new experiences and activities, consciously adapting and modifying our thought patterns, and using science-backed techniques to challenge our self are relevant activities to make yourself moving forward to magic recovery.



MANAGING YOUR MONEY

Reaching for long-term investment goals with short term responses – wrong

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

Investors dread volatile markets and, too often, their response is to jump out of investments when the market goes down and attempt to jump back in when it goes up. But it's a historical fact that markets will always fluctuate and the price of any stock or equity mutual fund is bound to be somewhat volatile in the short-term. The one proven approach for taking away much of your investment risk is simply this:

- History has shown that economic recoveries following recessions are typically both strong and durable. In fact, periods of expansion that came on the heels of downturns averaged 57 months, or close to five years. After 1960, the average period of expansion following a recession was even longer at 71 months, or close to six years.**

- Although negative returns in the short-term are relatively frequent, the



David Joseph, M.A., CFP®, CLU, RRC.

Financial Consultant

david.joseph@investorsgroup.com

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time in the market. Study after study has proven that time in the market delivers much better returns than trying to time the market. Here are some recent findings in support of a long-term investment strategy.

- Many of the strongest market returns occur in the periods immediately following sharp declines in equity markets. Since 1950, following the worst 12-month periods of performance on the S&P/TSX, the market has made solid gains just 12 months later with only one exception. And within five years, the markets were up significantly – meeting and exceeding long-term return expectations.*

possibility of

receiving a positive return greatly increases as the investment term lengthens. For example, between 1960 and 2015 staying invested in the market (S&P/TSX) for a year resulted in a positive return in 74.7% of the one-year periods, while staying invested for 15 years resulted in a positive return of 100% of the time.**

- In any one-year period, the returns of the S&P/TSX Composite Index have been as high as 86.9% and as low as -39.2%, a range of over 126%. However, when investors diversify their holdings and invest for the long term, this volatility decreases significantly.

For example, a “moderate” portfolio invested for five years would have experienced a range of average annual returns from -5% to +28%, and if invested for 20 years, from +8% to +15% (S&P/TSX 1970-2015 – range of returns before taxes).*

So, as these findings once more prove: Staying invested ensures you are always capitalizing on the upside of the market and reducing the impact of short-term market volatility. Most importantly, the possibility of receiving positive returns greatly increases as your investment term lengthens. Of course, having a properly diversified portfolio with the right mix of invest-

ments that matches your tolerance for risk is also key to achieving your long-term investment goals. Your professional advisor can help you do that within the right overall financial plan for you.

*Source: Investors Group Strategic Investment Planning

** Source: Investors Group Portfolio Analytics, National Bureau of Economic Research

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LET'S TALK MONEY:

- A Proletarian Guide to Financial Planning

By Rajini Nathan



My first thought was that she's going to try and scare me into buying policies that, at the end of our meeting, I'll be too scared not to have. Fear mongering. That's what I expected. But that is not what happened. Just after university I worked as an administrative assistant to a financial advisor in England and noticed that he spent more time cancelling and down-sizing insurance policies than he did taking out new policies for existing clients. Despite this knowledge, I still felt like I was walking into a meeting where I might as well be prepared to sign part of my monthly income away just to secure the ever coveted "peace of mind"

However, this is what happened instead...

The first step when meeting with a financial advisor would be to fill out some form of a questionnaire that will enable them to see how financially secure you currently are. Mirna Yogeswaran, from Inforce Life Financial Services presented me with such a document entitled "Bringing clarity to your financial plan" a ten page document that asks questions covering everything from the details of your family members to contingency plans that you have in case of emergency situations and future planning.

The first section covers what your current financial situation is. As I'm married to someone who is in the finance industry, my personal situation is a little different from the average household, however, as an individual, it was clear that I had a lot of work to do to establish whether I would be financially secure in the event of a life situation that could put a strain on my finances. Question 1 related to the amount of net income I currently had in reserve. I know for a fact that many households do not operate on this basis. Often the last week of the month is a stretch for people, leading many families into debt or cheque cashing situations at the end or beginning of the each month. As a young person, I'm not sure at what stage I was meant to realise that I needed to have the stipulated 3-6 months of monthly income in reserve, so the first question itself brings to light something that many people may not really consider as they begin their working careers.

Question 2 asks about the available line of credit we have. Now, again,



Rajini & Mirna

thanks to my husband I know that credit ratings are very important to be credible for a line of credit- however, there are many systems that can be employed to enhance those credit ratings, and if you are not financially savvy (or know someone that is), then a registered financial advisor would be able to help your credit rating maintain its' maximum potential.

We moved on to talk about medical emergencies in terms of critical illnesses and or accidents. What is your income replacement plan? I braced myself. Here it comes I thought. This is where I'll be buying some overpriced policy for sure. Again, not quite how it works I found. Mirna was in no rush to sell me anything or to even begin looking at what I might need. We still had a long way to go before we reached that conversation.

I couldn't hold back any longer. "You're just trying to scare people into buying policies aren't you" isn't what I exactly said, but, having probably dealt with many people like me, I'm sure she knew that's where the conversation was going. So she let me in on a few home truths.

Insurance policies are of course not a pre-requisite to life. Financial advisors are not just there to sell you policies, they are there to ensure that you are financially secure and as it is a regulated industry, like the medical profession, one wrong step and they could lose their licence. Their first focus is on

our current available savings. Is your money working for you? And are you making the most out of the capital that you have?

My main focus is primarily to keep me from spending my money unnecessarily and to ensure that no one else tries to "help" me spend it either. I've never really given thought to the fact that I could be making my money work for me. I honestly wouldn't even know where to begin with that. I slowly started to warm to what Mirna had to offer.

Banks will not necessarily give you a designated advisor, she said. They change from year to year and location to location. Financial advisors are commissioned based, and therefore it is in their best interest to ensure that they get the best products for you if they want to keep you on as a long term client.

I thought back to my days as an administrative assistant and the number of clients the firm had on file that were 20 yr old relationships and more. As I took notes, I'd hear them talking about children who had grown and married, retirements that had happened and spouses that had passed away. Mirna brought these memories back to me and I realised that it is in the advisors utmost benefit to ensure the longevity of their client- advisor relationship and not just try to earn quick money.

Mirna continued to enlighten me into the fact that Canadian banks invest in Canadian equities, and people

often forget to ask where their TFSA (Tax Free Savings Account) is being invested. Mostly, they are not given the option to choose where they would like to invest. This again was something that I needed to consider as, like most people, I trust my banks to do most of my work for me and expect that they will offer me the best possible option.

In Canada people are permitted to invest up to \$6000 (for 2019) in a TFSA each year without paying any tax on the interest/profit received; the Return on Investment (ROI) can vary from 1.5%-30%. Whilst the bank rates would be closer to 1.5%, more aggressive risk takers can benefit from higher returns depending on what type of portfolio they choose. As someone who is quite risk inclined, it perked my interest to see that there were other options that I could explore. However, a seasoned advisor would first take a look at my entire portfolio before even considering what type of investments I could be engaging in.

We moved on to discuss the issues of critical illness and long term care, those things that everyone knows is a possibility, but the issues that we really do not want to address in the here and now. Find out where the conversation leads next time.

Ciao for now!

If you would like to contact Mirna Yogeswaran you can do so at kalaimirna@gmail.com

OBITUARY NOTICE



MRS. LILLY MARGARET RAJARATNAM

Mrs. Lilly Margaret born in Jaffna Sri Lanka and resided in Toronto Ontario,
She passed away peacefully in Toronto aged 83 years on 29th May 2019.

She is the loving daughter of late Mr. Manuel Francis and late Mrs. Annammachi
and the loving wife of late Mr. Rajaratnam

She is the much loved mom of Mrs. Ratnadevi, late Mrs. Jasintha, Mrs. Irine,
Mr. Sylvester and Mr. Mervin Also Mrs. Lilly Margaret is the beloved sister of
late Mr. Xavier, late Mr. Rajendram and Mrs. Regina.

Mrs. Lilly Margaret's Funeral service and viewing to be held
06-06-2019 Thursday between 4 pm - 9pm also
07-06-2019 Friday between 4 pm - 9pm and
08-06-2019 Saturday between 8 am - 10am at
Chapel Ridge Funeral Home 8911 Woodbine Ave, Markham, ON L3R 5G1 thereafter
special mass will be held between 10.30-11.30 at
St. Thomas the Apostle 14 Highgate Dr, Markham, ON L3R 3R6
The cremation will be at Christ the King Catholic Cemetery
7770 Steeles Ave E, Markham, ON L6B 1A8 after the special mass.

Friends, Relatives & Family members please accept this information.

For further details call:

SYLVESTER (PHOTOFAST) - 416 230 3733

NIROZAN - 416 318 3995

MERVIN (PHOTOFAST) - 647 300 4530

IRINE - 647 991 7206

SHIRANI - 416 723 4198



\$20,000 donated to Canadian Tamil Medical Association from Mr. Tamil Canada event to educate community on mental health issues and awareness

By Siva Sivapragasam

The first ever event organized by Mr. Tamil Canada team recently was able to raise \$20,000 to be handed over to the Canada Tamil Medical Association to create awareness and to educate the Tamil community on mental health issues. Mental health problems have been steadily rising over the recent years and had contributed to several suicide deaths in the community.

A team of Canadian Tamils headed by Ajith Sabaratnam and consisting of Ravi Kanagasabay, Vilosan Sivatharman and Shankar Balachandran decided some time ago to form a committee that would spearhead projects to create awareness and also educate members of the Tamil community on mental health issues and help to eradicate suicide deaths specially among the younger aged males in the community. As a first step in this journey, the team decided to launch an event to collect funds for the proposed project and hand over the donation to a well-recognized medical organization to utilize the funds for this purpose.

The first event suitably titled "Mr. Tamil Canada" was recently held at the Markham Hilton Suites Conference Centre and was well attended by members of the community, media and business persons. The host and EMCEE who conducted the event was the well-known Vijay TV Super Singers host Priyanka who kept the guests entertained with her humour. CJ, the well-known violin player from Germany was also an artiste who performed at the event. CJ also plays the violin, drums, and sings. CJ began playing the violin at the age of four.

Dr. Shivakumar, the well-known medical professional gave an impressive short talk about mental health and commended the team for organizing this project to tackle mental health issues among the community. He is a dual board-certified adult and geriatric Psychiatrist from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. His contribution to research on mental health related disorders and illnesses is invaluable, and currently he is playing an active role in studying the reasoning behind the drastic increase in suicide among the Tamil Community across Canada.

The leader of the Mr. Tamil Canada team Ajith Sabaratnam outlined the basic objective of the project and thanked the several sponsors who helped to make the event a great success. He remarked that the team has in mind several other events lined up for the future and wanted the community's support for their initiatives. The title winner of Mr. Tamil Canada 2019 was Vijeyakrishnan Radhakrishnan.

(Seen here are some pictures taken at the event. Picture Courtesy "Tamil Mirror")



Monsoon Kitchen



GENIE SISTERS SAMAYAL SANTHAI



Welcome to our recipe corner! We sisters will entice you with recipes that we have fallen in love with and teach you a little Tamil along the way, as all the ingredients will have their Tamil names. Both of us love to cook and we have developed very different styles. Niranjini has a very refined palate and cooks more contemporary world cuisine with an Asian touch. Rajini is the founder of Tamilfood and teaches individual and group cooking classes in Toronto and abroad. Follow us on Instagram: @ninjaeatsfood and @tamil_food Facebook: /tamilfoodclasses Eat more, learn more!

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

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

Tropical mango sorbet

It's hard not to notice that mango season has well and truly arrived; and here in Toronto we're blessed with a huge variety of mangoes to make everything from pickles to curries to sorbet. Try out this super easy sorbet recipe and enjoy mango season to your hearts content!



Ingredients:

- ✓ 200g caster sugar (seeni/sakkarai) ✓ 2 Alphonso mangoes (maambazham)
- ✓ 250ml water (thanni) ✓ 1 lime, juiced (elumitchai/ thesikkai pazham)
- ✓ 1 passion fruit ✓ Pomegranate seeds, as required (maathulappazham)
- ✓ Dried rose petals, as required (roja ithalgal)

Optional:

- ✓ A few strands of saffron (kungumapoo)

Method:

In a saucepan, add the water and caster sugar to make simple sugar syrup. Bring it to the boil, making sure to stir it occasionally. Set it aside to cool. Cut the mangoes into chunks and blitz it in a blender until smooth. Alternatively, you can use tinned mango purée, but the fresher the better. Use the sugar syrup to aid blending if needed. Place the puréed mango, lime juice and sugar syrup in a large bowl and whisk together. Transfer the mixture into a suitable container and pop it in the freezer, stirring every hour or so. It should be fully set in 3-4 hours.

To serve, place in a few generous scoops in a bowl. Pour some of the passion fruit seeds on top of the scoops, along with pomegranate seeds, rose petals and saffron. Enjoy before it melts!

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



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TREE PLANTING BY SENIOR TAMILS' CENTRE OF ONTARIO

By Pathma Somalingam

On May 29th 'The Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario' participated on a tree planting at Wanita Park in Scarborough. About fifty trees were planted, from large ones like White Spruce and Maple to Mulberry bush!

The young Tamil Seniors doing this for the fourth year. The seniors are young at heart. Braved the morning rain and planted the trees with such energy and pleasure.



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International Poet Cheran Launches Six Books and donates entire proceeds of \$26,000 for Toronto University Tamil Chair

By Siva Sivapragasam

Six books were launched recently by well-known international poet Cheran and the entire proceeds amounting to \$26,000 were handed over for the Tamil Chair project at the University of Toronto. Dr. Wisdom Tettey, Vice President and Principal of University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus, received the donation on behalf of the Tamil Chair project.

Dr. R. Cheran, who is a Professor at the University of Windsor, is a Tamil Canadian academic, poet, playwright and journalist. He has authored over fifteen books in Tamil and his work has been translated into twenty languages. Dr. Cheran was the recipient of the International Poetry Award from ONV Kurup Foundation in Dubai in 2017. He has performed his poetry at various International writers' festivals and his plays in the English language have been produced and performed in Canada and the USA.

In June 2018, the University of Toronto, Scarborough Campus 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 period to fund the chair. "This commitment to establish a chair in Tamil studies is truly inspiring," said Professor Bruce Kidd, Former vice-president of the University of Toronto and principal of University of Toronto Scarborough Campus.

Tamil has been considered over the years as one of the oldest languages in the world abundantly rich with culture, tradition and civilization. Poet Bharathiyar's dream of spreading the Tami language around the world is now becoming a reality in North America. Steps have already been taken to

establish a Tamil Chair in the prestigious Harvard University in U.S.

It is estimated that there are about 300,000 Tamils currently in Canada. About 80 million people around the world speak Tamil. Tamil literature and poetry have been in existence for more than 2000 years. "This chair is not being created by a single rich man, but rather will be owned by the Tamil community. This is a proud moment for both the university and Tamils – both here in Toronto, Canada and around the world" said one of the Directors.

In accepting the cheque, Dr. Wisdom Tettey praised the Tamil community for their tireless work in support of this initiative and their tremendous dedication for the cherished partnership with UTSC.

The Tamil community has so far raised \$926,000 in donations and pledges and people are encouraged to donate online by visiting www.torontotamilchair.ca.



DTA Events Diary

DTA Celebrates Mother's Day, Participates in Senior Tea Party hosted by Pickering Caribbean Canadian cultural Association & No Borders Cultural Event 2019 and commemorates Mullivaaikaal 10th Anniversary

Durham Tamil Association celebrated Mother's Day, participated in Senior Tea Party hosted by Pickering Caribbean Canadian Cultural Association & No Borders Cultural Event 2019 and commemorated the Mullivaaikal 10th Anniversary event with a vigil recently. DTA also had its Seniors monthly meeting along with other events. (Seen here are some pictures taken at these events)



Mother's Day Celebration



Mother's Day Celebration



DTA Tamil School kids Mother's Day Celebration



Mother's Day Celebration



Senior Tea party



Senior Tea party



DTA Events Diary



Mullivaikkal 10th Anniversary Remembrance Vigil



Mullivaikkal 10th Anniversary Remembrance Vigil



Seniors monthly meeting



Seniors monthly meeting



No Borders Cultural Event



No Borders Cultural Event



No Borders Cultural Event



No Borders Cultural Event

by *Sugantha Raj, Chairperson, Public Relations Committee*

Report on the Doors Open

Richmond Hill - Saturday, May 11, 2019



Councillor David West and young Dancers



YRP Chief of Dist #2 Bellman, MPP Daisy Wai & MP Leona Aleslev

This is the fifth year that the Ganesha Temple has been invited to join the “Doors Open Richmond Hill 2019 event, duly held on Saturday, May 11th. It turned out to be an overwhelming success. Listed below are a few reasons for that. Due publicity was also given in the Richmond Hill Snapd Paper’s web, and the May issue of the Monsoon Journal. Our volunteers also distributed a short information leaflet at all houses near and around the temple area just a day or two before the event which proved to be effective, since quite a few visitors mentioned about receiving the note at their places.

Calling this event an overwhelming success itself could be an understatement, since we had close to 500 visitors as per the volunteers keeping track of those coming in through the basement. Actually our Volunteers were in their place to receive right from 10:00 AM; however, the visitors started coming from 9:30 AM. In addition, quite a number of people came directly to upstairs and their numbers were not included in the attendance count. None the less, we were told by the Heritage Council of the Town of Richmond Hill, the organizer of this event; that no other heritage centre is even remotely close to us in the attendance number except for the David Dulop Observatory that opened the place to the public for the first time this year. This seems to be the highest number of visitors for the Doors Open in Richmond Hill since we started participating.

Also, heartwarming feeling this time was the number of Special Guests who attended this event at our premises. The list included Hon. Leona Alekseev, MP for Aurora-Oak-Ridges-Richmond Hill (which covers our temple), Richmond Hill MP Hon. Majid Johari, Hon. Daisy Wai MPP for Richmond Hill, Hon. MPP Michael Parse, MPP for Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill. Mayor and couple of Councilors from the City of Richmond Hill, the York Region Police Commander of Dist. #2 at Major McKenzie Dr., (which covers our temple).

As in the past years, we were able to get free coffee, this time courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. Finlayson Franchise owners of the McDonald Restaurant on 16th Ave. near Leslie St. in Richmond Hill. and our Raghavan provided unbelievable spread of bakery products and nutritional and healthy snack crackers with dips. Both were a hit and everyone without exception enjoyed them and not only that they all were finished well before the closing time. We owe a debt of gratitude and grateful thanks to them both. Quite a number of visitors wanted to taste the spicy food of our temple and they helped themselves to Sambar Sadam and Upma that was specially made for this event.

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

As a foot note would like to add the link below sent by Hon. Leona Aleslev, MP for Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, containing what she said in the floor of the Parliament about Doors Open in Richmond Hill besides other issues. She had made a special mention of our Temple in her talk.

THE HINDU TEMPLE SOCIETY OF CANADA
Richmond Hill Ganesh Temple



Community Watch



YRP Chief Russman and Mehndhi Artist



Group of Dedicated Volunteers



MP Majid Jowhari with young dancers



MPP Daisy Wai



Volunteers



Wife of Russ Bellman Chief of Dist #2 of YRP



MP Leona Aleslev presenting the Temple with a Certificate



YRP Supdt. Heidi Schellorn



Commander of Dist # 2 YRP Bell Russman & MPP Daisy Wai



YRP Supdt. Heidi Schellorn & Mayor Dave Barrow



30 years and still going strong, Waterloo Tamils community

Waterloo, ON: A symbol of Unity among local Tamil Community reflected in the Diversity Awards Gala at Hotel Holiday Inn in Kitchener on Saturday, May 4 2019. As part of Tamil Cultural Association's 30th Anniversary celebration, it was a collaborative event with local Portuguese, German, Chinese, Arabic, Sri Lankan and Indian Arts and cultural groups.

The Chief Guest for the event was Toronto MP Hon. Gary Anandasangaree and spouse, along with prominent Toronto lawyer Mrs. Dilani Gunarajah. Hon G Anandasangaree delivered the greeting messages from Canadian Prime Minister Hon. Justin Trudeau and Waterloo MP Hon. Bardish Chagger.

Awards were presented to six candidates from the community for volunteerism. Shawn Johnston from the Waterloo Aboriginal Education Centre, Dr. Rania Al Hamoud lecturer University of Waterloo, Waterloo Dentist and East Indian Community Walkathon head Dr. Kerr Banduk, Miss. Leya Oommen, Nigel Lee for Waterloo Region School Board, Mrs. Selvi Sureswaran from Sri Abiramy Dance Academy were honoured. Also, life time plaque was presented to Mr. Marcil Francis of Waterloo. He was the first secretary of the association, in the year 1989 and a leading promoter of Tamil Culture in the region. His son, Samuel Asokanathan received the award on his behalf.

The president of Tamil Cultural Association, Mrs. Yoga Arumugam, welcomed all guests and members of the public. She elaborated the achievement of the association has done during the past years including raising more than \$100,000 for Tsunami victims in Sri Lanka and to Hospitals in the Region of Waterloo. Hon. Gary Anandasangaree praised the achievements of the local Tamil community and said TCA has set a example in bringing various communities together for the celebration.

Local and Toronto area dignitaries including Raji Saini Kitchener MP, Marwan Tabra Kitchener MP, Mayor of Kitchener Berry Vrabanovich and sponsors attended the event. Cultural programs and Dinner were the main highlight. The event was hosted by Joe Pavia from CBC Radio. Mr. Dennis Loyola, the Secretary delivered the thank you speech. Close to 200 guests attended the event.

DIVERSITY AWARDS 2019 - WATERLOO REGION



Dr. Kerr Banduk



Miss. Leya Oommen



Rania Al Hamoud



Nigel Lee



Shawn Johnston



Selvi Sureswaran






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Tamil Cultural Association of Waterloo Region www.tamilculturewaterloo.org



TCASD and DTA jointly commemorate Mullivaikal remembrance

The Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham (TCASD) and the Durham Tamil Association (DTA) jointly co-hosted a remembrance vigil to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Mullivaikal remembrance day and atrocities committed.

The following organizations were also associated with the event:

- Tamil Memorial Foundation
- Tamil Canadian Center for Civic Action
- South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
- Canadian Tamil Youth Alliance
- Academic and Fine Arts of Durham

In May 2009 thousands of civilians were trapped in the civil war that raged in Northern Sri Lanka ending with several deaths and also accounting for many missing persons.

The following elected MP's, MPP and the community leaders joined the vigil and showed their support to the Durham Tamil Community.

Hon. MP Mark Holland, Hon. MP Jennifer O'Connell, Hon. MP Gary Anandasangaree, Hon. MPP Vijay Thanigasalam, City of Pickering Councillor Maurice Brenner, Toronto School Board Trustees Parthi Kandavel and Anu Sriskandaram, Community Activist and prior Toronto Councillor Neethan Shan, and other community leaders were there to show their support.

TCASD & DTA wishes to thank all the participants who performed on this day, namely, A & A Dance School, Srimathi Tharmini Teacher and her students, Srimathi Manoranjan Thusitharan Teacher's students, and the singer Jeremy.



Santhiyaragam 2019 – Golden Super Singer Competition

Santhiyaragam 2019 – Golden Super Singer Competition Program is to be held on October 12, 2019 at the Tamil Isai Kala Mandram Auditorium.

This is one of the unique programs that gives a stage for Tamil community's elders to show case their singing talents and fulfill their long lasting dreams for singing.

This great opportunity truly motivates the elders to come out of their comfort zones and allows them to mingle with others and making them to participate enthusiastically, which helps them to worry less about their health challenges and mental agonies.

The creative head of this unique program, Mrs. Indrani Nagenthiram, CEO of Villa Karuna Home for Seniors came with this idea 4 years ago and since then she has staged many 55+ age of individuals who had a desire to sing and stage their singing talents.

Santhiyaragam Team truly appreciate their well-wishers, sponsors and participants for their ongoing support.

The first recording for this program will take place on Friday, June 7, 2019, at 6 pm. If you would like to be a guest, please contact 416-200-6971 for further details.



SELECTED PARTICIPANTS FOR THE SANTHIYARAGAM 2019 GOLDEN SUPER SINGER COMPETITION



SANTHIYARAGAM 2019 – ORGANIZING TEAM WITH THE CREATIVE HEAD MRS INDRANI NAGENTHIRAM



SANTHIYARAGAM 2019 – JUDGES PANEL



SANTHIYARAGAM 2019 – MUSIC PLAYERS



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Saturday June 22nd 2019 at 7:00 pm,
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(Intersection of Kennedy Rd and Ellesmere Rd)



For more information please contact :

Dr.V.Mannivannan, Email: manni_vannan@yahoo.com Phone: 647-949-5205

Dr.K.Theivendirarajah, Email: theivendirarajahk@hotmail.com Phone:416-335-3453



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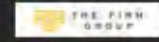
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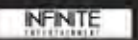
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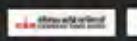
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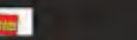
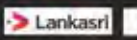
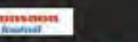
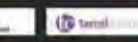
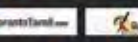
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